

The Lodge – Prologue

The email said, “I might write a story about what happened to our coal-fired power Station when Obama decided to bankrupt the coal industry.” Security officers and a few personnel are the only remaining employees on site. Most of the workers have small farms in the area and are able to grow gardens to feed their family. Since the head of security had to remain, he was able to take over the company owned Lodge with his family and boat across the lake or bicycle across the dam to check on the now dead power Station several times each day. There was a well at the Lodge and the lake to provide water. A propane tank was full plus a fireplace. Wood was plentiful since the Lodge is surrounded by forest. The area was fairly remote and surrounded by conservation areas, game, fowl, fish should remain plentiful too. A grassy area on the south side of the Lodge could be planted for food crops.”

What he left out of his email was that for several months before it shut down, the power Station located in Missouri, had been stockpiling coal. Forgive my poor memory, but if I recall correctly, they had received about 6 times as much coal as they were burning and had it piled everywhere. After the initial trainload a day, it dropped to 4 loads a week and finally 3. The trainloads ran anywhere from 14,500-18,400 tons each. They had built a stockpile, a mountain he said, holding about 440,000 tons but would stop adding to it under Obama’s new rules.

I knew this because we were friends who exchanged emails on a daily basis and talked frequently on the phone up to the day the Station shut down. After that, all of the coal fueled plants around the nation shut down and the grid ran out of power. The power Station was on a lake southeast of Kansas City. Around the lake there was a company owned Lodge with a lawn of about 10-15 acres that could be plowed under if necessary. Well, you read the email, so you know this.

The Lodge is a one-story wood framed building with a polished split log exterior to make it look like a large cabin. It has a deep well and a propane tank (550-1100 gallon?). It has a fireplace but needs a woodstove or an insert to be efficient. There are portable generators at the Station that they were able to take one and a spare to keep the Lodge supplied with electricity. It has 8 bedrooms if I have heard correctly with 4 in the east wing and 4 in the west wing. The kitchen and living room are both in the center of the Lodge with a covered porch on the north side overlooking the lake. It has a small basement for the industrial sized water heater but a larger area would have to be dug out for a shelter if a nuclear event is in the story. The basement is only accessible from exterior stairs on the NE corner of the Lodge. It has some south-facing roof over the bedroom wings which would be great for solar.

It has a 3 car garage which could make a dandy meat and food locker in the winter. A large harvest of Snow or Canadian geese from the lake and deer from the Conservation area could be stored in the garage all winter and processed as time allows.

The Lodge is roughly 1.7 miles via road from the power Station. The road is dirt until

you get to the dam where it is paved.

The Lodge is on the slope of a small hill. The meadow (20-25 acres) to the south of the Lodge is actually higher and might even be about the same height as the roof. Down the hill about 75-100' is a boat landing on a small inlet off the lake.

There is a smaller body of water about ½ mile to the SE of the Lodge referred to as the "duck pond" and it is well-named. There are woods on 3 sides of the meadow and Hickory trees between the Lodge and the lake.

The power Station sat on Montrose Lake. Bass sampling between spring 2003 and 2005 revealed an improved bass population compared to the past several years. Improvement in the number of 10-14 inch bass will result in better angling for large bass over the next few years. Bass abundance remains on the low to moderate side compared to other lakes, but bass caught by anglers are in good condition and often large. Anglers may fish longer between strikes than in some other lakes, but the bass they catch may be 18 to over 20 inches long.

Bass anglers at Montrose Lake should plan on fishing murky water that may have less than 8 inches of visibility. Lures that make some noise or vibration may help trigger strikes. Montrose Lake is a power Station cooling reservoir and usually warms earlier in spring than other large reservoirs. Anglers may begin catching bass near the outlet of the warm water discharge during February and March. Bass may be located in stands of water willow in 12-18 inches of water during April and early May. Fallen trees cover much of the shoreline and shelter bass during spring and early summer. Montrose Lake is very shallow, particularly in the upper portion so anglers are urged to use caution while boating. A special length and daily limit is in effect for largemouth bass on Montrose Lake. The length limit of 18 inches and reduced daily limit of two black bass was implemented to allow these fast growing bass to reach quality size.

Crappie angling will be poor during 2006. Crappie numbers were poor when sampled during fall 2004, but many fish were 10 inches or larger.

Catfish angling is very good. Anglers may catch catfish from two to over ten pounds. Channel catfish are the most numerous, but some large flathead catfish are also present. Power company employees were able to fish the waters around the discharge area before the facility shut down and cat fish of 20-30 pounds were not all that uncommon. Evidence as to the size of flathead catfish present in Montrose Lake was demonstrated in April 2003. An angler from Odessa tied the current pole and line state record for flathead catfish by catching a 77 pound 8 ounce fish and a 35 pound fish the same morning. Anglers are reminded that outboard motors larger than 10 horsepower are allowed, but are required to be operated at no wake speed.

Let me tell you happened and you can write it up for me. Thank God they finally got the power back up and the internet restored. Who would have thought that the disaster we all prepared for would happen as a result of a presidential directive?

The Lodge – Chapter 1

I knew the Station Manager in passing but had only been into his office to deliver a copy of the latest terrorism alert. Why would he want to meet with me today?

“Robert, I wanted to tell you that we’re being force to shut down the Station when that Executive Order goes into effect. We use between 6,000 and 6,500 tons of coal each day. Our coal pile contains roughly 498,000 tons of coal and we’re still receiving more trainloads. Averaging our coal usage, we’ll be shut down in 80 days, give or take.”

“Could I...”

“Hold your questions until I’m done, I’ll answer most of them with what I say next. Ok, as head of security you will remain onsite along with some of your employees to provide 24/7 security to protect our assets. In addition there will be one employee for each of the three turbines. Since the Lodge is close, you and your family and the others and their families can stay there. It has 8 bedrooms and some food. We’ll add to that and set up a contract with the propane dealer to keep the tank topped off until the court rules on the case.”

“What case?”

“I’ll get to that, hang on. I’m not putting you off; it’s just that I don’t want to forget anything. Once the Station shuts down, your people will move from unarmed to armed guards. Can you handle that?”

“Of course. Many of my guards are former cops, but what case?”

“Do you have any idea how many coal burning generating plants there are in this country? The United States generates over 50% of its electricity from coal plants. The USA is number one in the world in coal reserves.”

“I knew we didn’t use much nuclear energy since it made up only 20% and hydropower only made up about 5%.”

“The coal fuel energy providers have gone together and sued to block the Executive Order. That includes both the companies generating power from coal and those supplying the coal. It’s a multibillion dollar business, so there is a lot at stake.”

I left the meeting with the Station Manager totally confused and slightly overwhelmed. What did the government think people would do when the lights went out because 50% of all of the electricity generated in the US just went away? I had two thoughts, neither very pleasant, a Second Revolution or a Second Civil War.

I had been really surprised when I’d hired as the Site Supervisor a few months back and learned that the Station wasn’t protected by armed guards. It had a front gate to block

the paved road in and out, but the Station site wasn't even totally fenced in and the main gate was the only one normally manned. Guards did a foot patrol of the exterior buildings of the power Station several times each shift. We also drove over to the dam and Lodge on the other side of the lake to make sure everything was secure.

Having armed guards had implications like getting my staff all certified on their duty weapon, actually acquiring the weapons and so forth. Before I'd moved to Missouri, I lived west of the Rockies and retained my CCW since it was recognized by 30 states. The only guns I brought with me included my M14 semi-auto, stainless steel Winchester Defender 12 gauge with extended magazine and a WWII vintage M1911A1 pistol my Dad had given me. Except for the .45, I carried them empty and cased behind the seat in my truck.

I not only had CERT training, I'd taught some CERT, Law Enforcement Protective Measures and community policing classes. Really, I only had a little of this and a little of that and was working to re-equip myself. When I moved, I was forced to leave a lot behind and I couldn't get it back. I gave my buddy a heads up and told him it would be a good time to stock up on gasoline, food, ammo and cash. The more, the better. I also asked him to write up an account of what happened based on my notes that I'd get to him when I could.

My girlfriend's father was an over the road trucker who kept his eyes open and his mouth shut. You would have been surprised some of the things he had seen recently on the road, including a convoy carrying nuclear weapons. He mentioned that to some other guy who responded, "I know, I was part of that convoy. The guys on the Hummers had orders to shoot. Only 2 of the 3 trailers were actually carrying nukes and you won't believe where they were bound for." I found out but it didn't make a lot of sense at the time. The convoy consisted of 4 Hummers and 3 tractor trailers. They travelled in close proximity but not together. He would probably not be able to be home immediately if TSHTF.

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According to the bills of lading we had an 80 day supply of coal, but only 5 weeks left until the mandatory shutdown became effective. I took my guys to the Sheriff a few at a time to get them set up for their concealed carry driver's license endorsements. We ordered enough of the Police Duty Belts to equip me and my small force. We went with a nylon rig equipped with a pistol holster, pepper spray holster, handcuff case, magazine pouches and baton holder. They had their choice of either a 2 or 3 liter Camelback as well as a BOB to meet their individual needs and weaponry. We kept our uniform shirts because they looked "official" but traded our uniform slack for khaki cargo-type uniform pant from 5.11. I opted for fixed-length side-handle batons, Monadnock PR-24s. We went with 16 channel Motorola radios which could be programmed to include the local law enforcement/EMS channels and both of ours. Most of the officers already owned Israeli M-15 gas masks with fresh M-95 filters. I hoped they worked since everything else was on backorder.

The company wouldn't allow practicing with our weapons on their clock or property, but did pay for the ammunition. That attitude was about to change drastically. Let's just say they had a blinding flash of the obvious and their anti-gun policy changed overnight.

The pistols we selected were Para Ordinance P-14s and my guys would carry 4 extra magazines. Personally, and much to my regret, my hands were too small for the P-14. I had one, but elected to carry my 1911A1 with the 10-round Chip McCormick magazines and 6 extra magazines, equipping us with equal amounts of ammo. We also planned to equip half of the force with Bushmaster M-4 .223s and the rest with 9-shot Mossberg 590A1s. I kept my M14 nearby at all times instead of the M4 since I doubted there would be many poodles to shoot.

I went back to the boss and all but insisted that the fence be extended to the width of the property and down to the lake and told him they needed to block off the waterways at the inlet and discharge areas to keep out boats. They seemed disinclined until I pointed out that there were going to a lot of unhappy people when we shut down and they might take their anger out on the Station. After all, we wanted an intact Station to restart when we won the lawsuit and/or got a restraining order postponing the shut-downs.

The Congress passed coal phase out was far more generous in eliminating the use of coal. It primarily related to not building new coal fired plants that didn't meet carbon emission standards; the standards were ludicrous, they had to limit their carbon output to no more than a natural gas fueled plant. The company continued to stockpile coal until about two days before the shutdown. In fact, the last trainload of coal wasn't even unloaded and just sat there on the tracks. The other interesting thing was the new storage tank for diesel fuel, a 350 Thousand gallon tank. Coal burning plants sometimes use the fuel oil to restart a plant, but, 350,000-gallons? It too was full by the time the shutdown came.

Back to the subject of the fence, maybe they were afraid someone would steal the coal, the total amount now in the mountain of coal and on the railroad cars by the time the ban came into being amounted to a 100 day supply or 650,000 tons plus or minus a bit. The new fence was an 8' high chain link fence topped by razor wire and went around both sides and the front of the Station. On the lake front which came right up to the Station, the barrier was constructed almost entirely of razor wire using barbed wire to support the razor wire concertina.

I felt better about security than I had since the day I was hired; we had armed guards with proper training, radios to contact the Henry County Sheriff, and Reserve Deputy Status. I had to stop and do an inventory of what we had available to provide security, in case we missed something. We had ten cases containing five battle backs of SS-109 for the AR-15s. We had 2,000 rounds of South African 7.62x51 for my M14. We had slugs, 00 buckshot, #4 buckshot and beanbag rounds for the shotguns. There were five 1,000-round cases of Speer 230gr Lawman FMJ for practice and two 1,000-round cas-

es of Speer 230gr Gold Dot HP for duty use. We also had several bricks of .22 Long Rifle and a mixed case of field loads for the shotguns. In other words, we didn't have enough ammo.

Several of the staff brought in their own .22 rifles for squirrel hunting and to keep rabbits out of the garden, should we be forced to plant one. Some also chose to bring their military rifles, a mixed bag of M1As, Garand's, FN FALs, one PTR and a few semi-auto AK style rifles. They had to supply their own ammo for those rifles, although that didn't seem to be a problem.

My girlfriend, Amanda..."Don't call me Mandy"... and I took one of the bedrooms in the Lodge and added a youth bed for her son from a prior marriage. The single men doubled and tripled up leaving more bedrooms for the married men and their families. We also had two couches that folded out into hide-a-beds.

The day before the Station closed, a truck from Walton Foods in Idaho delivered more than half a truckload of those packaged deals they sell, the one year deluxe food supply. Next, a Sears delivery truck showed up with two 25ft³ chest freezers and a second fridge. And finally, a meat processor delivered enough meat to fill the freezers. We had beef, chicken, pork, turkey, fish filets and lunch meat, all frozen. Harvesting game and planting a garden will stretch out those supplies.

We expected trouble from the start, the minute the lights went out. The phones quit ringing as soon as the power was out and the switchboard failed. Before that it was all that the three turbine guys could do to answer the phones and explain that the generating Station had been shut down by presidential order. Eventually, they quit answering except for an unlisted number only the company and employees knew about.

Around midday, our unhappy consumers started to assemble at the gate. I explained until I was blue in the face that it wasn't the company's decision. The tons of coal just sitting there frustrated them further. If they didn't like it, they could take it up with the White House. There was nothing we could do.

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It was rather interesting how they got the engine pointed the right way after the coal cars were unloaded. The full cars came directly into the Station and an unloading shed where they were emptied. The engine then pulled the next car forward, etc. until all the cars were empty. When all of the cars were empty and sitting on the main line, the engine or engines followed a big loop at the end which circled the engines so they were now pointing the right direction. It was called a balloon loop. They had two puller engines and a third, pusher engine, for really large loads.

In addition to the main gate and the construction gate, we had two railroad gates giving us four, rather than one, gates to guard and we didn't really have enough guards to man all of them. When the crowd started to get unruly, I ordered, "beanbags forward." Bean-

bags are generally considered non-lethal, but there's always a concern. Half of the shotguns were filled with beanbags and the others had #4 buckshot. They were backed up by the fellas with the Bushmaster M-4s. We called the Sheriff and explained the problem, we didn't want to shoot unless there were no alternative. There are the original beanbags and the newer ones with a tail called 12 Gauge Tail Stabilized Pen-Prevent Bean Bag Ammo.

The four with the beanbag ammo stopped about 20 feet behind the gate. Less than lethal ammo can be lethal if fired at too close a range. This ammo bore the warning 'may be lethal at less than 7 yards'. The crowd moved forward, pressing those in the front up against the gate and I almost didn't have the heart to issue the order. But I said, "Fire." The people who were hit were suspended in place by those behind them.

"New targets, fire."

"New targets fire."

The only thing that kept the gate up was that articulated Caterpillar 854G with the huge bucket that we now pushed up against the gate after they had pushed a coal car back against the train gate and forward against the train exit gate, leaving us two, rather than four gates to guard.

While I scanned the crowd at the gate, there was something wrong. I just couldn't put my finger on it. Something was just not right with the crowd. After the first volleys, it dawned on me. For the most part these weren't really locals at all. There were some locals who came to find out what had happened but it was the one red hat that caught my eye. On that hat was a picture of Che Guevara! Then I saw another...and another, all of them working the crowd into a mob. These were mostly anarchists. Some were part of the anti-coal crowd still trying to cause problems. Some were probably communists...anarchists...all the other "ists". Whatever their cause, their goal was to cause trouble in our community. Was this going on nationwide?

This doesn't mean we don't have troublemakers here in the Clinton area. The usual suspects; the drunks...the bullies. They had made it through life by their meanness and not their brains. You saw their names in the police reports at least once each week in the Clinton Democrat when they got arrested for drunken driving or beating their wife or kids. They were an anarchists dream when it came to causing confrontations.

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"Ok, all three turbines are down and cooled off, right?"

"Yes they are."

"Is there any reason for more than one of you to be here at a time?"

The Lodge – Chapter 2

“I don’t see why.”

“Then why don’t the three of you work out 8 hour shifts? I’ll stay out of it, for the sake of simplicity and just deal with my guard force.”

“Do you need help with that?”

“What, dealing with my guard force?”

“Yes. We all brought our rifles, shotguns and pistols, just in case. That’s part of the reason we were picked, I think, because we all had Main Battle Rifles and were experienced in their use.”

“What do you have?”

“American made rifles, semi-autos.”

“M1As?”

“Either that or converted M14s, yes. Our shotguns are Remington 870s, 12-gauge with magazine extensions. The three of us favor the tried and true M1911 pistol. We don’t have a lot of ammo, but we have the firearms. We sort of figured if they got by you, we’d back you up and do our best to keep them away from the turbines.”

“Ex-military?”

“First Gulf War. We’ve known each other for a long time and often shoot together.”

“Are you any good?”

“Well, we sort of didn’t exist in that war. In 1988, the Army went with the M-24 SWS, that Remington rifle. There was nothing wrong with the M21s the snipers were using so they were issued to some skilled shooters. There were over 1,400 M21 rifles and all were issued. These days, they call those shooters Designated Marksmen.”

“I didn’t realize we actually used many infantry in Desert Storm.”

“That’s just it, all trained up and no party to attend. They fought that war with airplanes, tanks and ships. Like I say, we never existed. We got out, got the training together and ended up all three working at this Station.”

“How did you manage that? I was told that they usually only hire one guy at a time.”

“Just lucky, I guess.”

I wasn't about to look a gift horse in the mouth and if they were half as good as he claimed, we would be far better off for it. Talking to someone who knew about the coal cars, I found out the "box" is ¼" aluminum plate. He knew it was hardened and thought it was at least T-5 hardness.

What was going through my mind was fortifying the Lodge and the power Station using those coal cars. There were about 100 cars in this particular train and the cars each had two sides. If we could use the truck mounted welder and acetylene rig to cut them up, we could erect a more formidable barrier. In the second half of the 20th century, coal haulage shifted from open hopper cars to high-sided gondolas. Using a gondola, the railroads are able to haul a larger amount of coal per car since gondolas do not include the equipment needed for unloading. The 52' car had an inside height of 6'; and a cubic capacity of approximately 3,565 cubic feet and the estimated load limit of 219,000 lbs.

One car could provide the material needed to erect 104' of 6' high wall. Not exactly a high wall, but it would afford some measure of protection. Protecting the Lodge would be a different matter, we'd need to use two layers and fill in between with something that could stop bullets should we be fired upon. I decided to do the Station first and handle the Lodge second. The Lodge would have the wall all across the front and down both sides all the way to the lake and if there was enough material, across the lakeside.

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The title of *Never Say Never Again*, a remake of *Thunderball*, was based on a conversation between Sean Connery and his wife. After *Diamonds Are Forever* he told her he'd *never* play James Bond again, and there he was, playing James Bond again. Her response was for him to "never say never again". Well I sure never thought this could happen, not in the US of A. World War III, possibly; an asteroid strike, well there was Deep Impact and Armageddon; Yellowstone erupting, oh that BBC production about Yellowstone erupting; and, even a HEMP taking out all power like *Lights Out*. But the president ordering all coal fuel plants shut down? Impossible! I voted for the other guy, but they weren't that different.

Last winter, we had a real dose of reality, first the Midwest, especially Iowa, was hit by ice storms and about a week later, mid-December, the Northeast all but shut down due to those same ice storms. At one point, it was reported that 1¼ million customers were without power and it would take weeks to restore. Governors declared emergencies and transported people dependent on oxygen to care centers.

Compare that to the current shutdown. The grid is tied all together. When 50% of the power plants all go down at midnight on a specific date in February, only a few places have power because forewarned is forearmed and they disconnected from the grid. Most places didn't believe he'd dare do it and although they were forewarned, they weren't forearmed and they went down too.

Add to that mix a group of environmentalist that have an axe to grind against the coal industry and the situation goes from difficult to impossible. To add insult to injury, these people must have sought advice from groups like PETA. Che Guevara indeed! It was obvious that we were in for a fight when two Sheriff's patrol cars, each with two Deputies, pulled in and tried unsuccessfully to restore order. They called for backup from the Missouri Highway Patrol, Barracks A. It took a bit but they came rolling in Code 3, four cars, four Troopers. Their shotguns were not loaded with beanbags.

The eight men sent to our rescue had it sized up in no time and were arresting those the Deputies identified as non-locals. Once a local was told to go home, they tucked tail and left. The Sheriff sent out a school bus to haul those arrested off to jail.

"What did you shoot them with?"

"Stabilized beanbags."

"Ouch, they really hurt. They've had us on full alert since midnight. I think they're just getting started with their foolishness. Are you staying in the Station?"

"No, we're staying at the Lodge, down that dirt road and just past the Dam."

"Are you going to run in shifts?"

"Eight on, sixteen off, to begin with and adjust as needed. We're hoping for a Restraining Order that will allow us to restart the Station."

"Then you haven't heard?"

"Phones are down."

"Case dismissed."

"Damn."

"You can say that again. The Governor has called up the Guard; seems like that's happening everywhere."

"So what's going to happen to the people you arrested?"

"They were arrested for trespassing since they were on KCLP property. They'll just claim they were exercising their right of free speech. Slap on the hand kind of penalty; a fine or a few days in jail. We didn't find any guns when we searched them."

"Just so you know, those coal cars are mainly owned by KCPL. They have aluminum sides that we can unbolt and use to reinforce the fence and secure the area around the

Lodge. I've seen them repaired right here onsite. Over at the Lodge, we'll use two rows of the plates and fill in between with soil."

"Why not use coal; you have a mountain of the stuff?"

"Soil doesn't burn."

"How much power did you put out?"

"One hundred seventy-five megawatts per unit; three units, so 510 megawatts. As far as building those barriers goes, we have that Caterpillar 854G."

"Well, good luck. Call the next time you have trouble."

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For whatever reason the instigators didn't come back and the locals who had to have power found another source. We emptied all of the coal from the train and then began to remove the sides of the cars. Our mountain of coal was even higher now. However the coal could do more than provide the heat to create the steam. I just had a thought what to use for the emplacements. One of the byproducts of a coal fired plant is Bottom Ash. It is used in road construction and sold to companies that haul it out by the semi-load. There is also more produced than is sold and there is another mountain of bottom ash west of the power Station where it is dumped by the truck load. We have front end loaders and dump trucks on site to move it anywhere we need to but it will take some time. It could be piled up behind the sides of the cars to hold the sides in place against the fence. We did that on three sides and used an extra panel we could lift out of the way with the Cat to enter or exit the 4 gates.

It didn't make much sense to dismantle the coal cars only to put the two sides opposite each other over at the Lodge. We didn't know how much the rail cars weighed, but the Dam had a load limit of 20,000 pounds (10 tons). It would be better if we could figure out how to get some of the empty coal cars up to the Lodge and put them end to end to form a wall which we could fill with soil. Rail track is 4'8½" (gauge) inside to inside in the US. If we could move enough track to get the cars to the Lodge, we'd be set, it was downhill all the way to the lake. One point seven miles is just about 9,000'. We would need a few ties to start off with, and then could pull the ties we'd set free to continue the process.

I'm certain I wouldn't have given it any further thought, but for his comment, case dismissed. When we considered the amount of work to lay 9,000 feet of rail compared to dismantling and transporting the coal car sides, it worked out to be about even. That decided it; we were going to be railroad men. We needed a curved section of track to start off with and pulled a section from the balloon loop. We pulled up the ties and placed them where we wanted the line and awkwardly drove in new (used) spikes in us-

ing sledge hammers as opposed to spike hammers. However, I should point out that, Houston we've had a problem.

To hell with it, we began laying track because it would make getting the car bodies to the Lodge much easier. And, so it went one section at a time until we had a new line all the way to the cabin. Plan A, part 2, pulling the cars off the rail into the relatively soft soil and getting them down to the lake was almost an exercise in futility. Those damned wheels sank into the soil. That wasn't necessarily a bad thing, until we had to remove the coal cars. It closed most of the gap between the ground and the bottom of the car. Those sides sure did look like 6' to me, but they were only 5'6". We took the sides off and rolled the cars past the dam and then reassembled them. We weren't getting a break here and every last one of us was tired. Amanda and April, along with the other wives, kept hot food on the table and our clothes clean. When we finished, it would only take one person to fill the coal cars with soil and provide the needed protection. And, we had one side of a car to use as a gate for the Lodge.

Needed protection? Well, yeah, how many PAW stories have you read that suggest what will happen when the lights go out? Riots in Kansas City and St. Louis sound familiar? Different location, same story. The environmentalists who were behind this mess were lying low; probably in their bunkers with a diesel fueled generator and an assortment of Mountain House meals.

Who said, *If you're a young person looking at the future of this planet and looking at what is being done right now, and not done, I believe we have reached the stage where it is time for civil disobedience to prevent the construction of new coal plants that do not have carbon capture and sequestration.* Yes, him (Al Gore).

In March, 2008, Henry A. Waxman and Edward J. Markey, co-chair of the US House of Representatives Committee on Government Oversight and Reform, introduced HR 5575, the *Moratorium on Uncontrolled Power Plants Act of 2008*. The legislation addresses the largest new source of global warming pollution – new coal-fired power plants that are being built without any controls on their global warming emissions.

The legislation states: *Effective upon the date of enactment of this Act, no permitting authority shall issue a permit for a proposed new coal-fired electric generating unit under the Clean Air Act, unless the permit requires the unit to use state-of-the-art control technology to capture and permanently sequester carbon dioxide emissions from such unit.*

State-of-the-art control technology is defined as the term *technology that captures not less than 85 percent of the total carbon dioxide produced by the unit on an annual average basis and permanently sequesters that carbon dioxide in a geological formation approved by the Administrator in a manner that prevents its later release into the atmosphere.*

The Lodge – Chapter 3

It would appear to a casual observer that someone went a little too far with his order shutting down the coal powered plants. Nobody wanted to be without electricity, they just wanted the carbon dioxide emissions reduced. The only way to do that was to shut down the coal fueled plants. Be careful what you wish for, God has a sense of humor.

Should he suddenly reverse himself, it would take the better part of a week to get the generating plants back up; and, he'd be showing his true colors, nincompoop (an offensive term that deliberately insults somebody's intelligence or competence). We voted for the other guy.

I'll say this much, with our economy in the toilet, the big 3 automakers going broke, the head of an investment company (Bernard L. Madoff) admitting to a \$55 Billion ponzi scheme, there were many things far more important than a little carbon dioxide.

Amanda's stepdad was stuck out on the road in his semi trying to get back, I felt responsible for Amanda's mom, April, and her 10 year old sister, Bekah. We'd need to bring them with us to the Lodge. Evan would know how to reach us when he is able to get home. The good news is that April was an EMT. She and Bekah are also both shooters. I'd make sure April brought her MAK-90 and 9mm. Bekah hits what she aims at with her 22.

Apparently, the White House felt that it was better that all the Governors call up their National Guards and try, probably unsuccessfully, to maintain order. It couldn't happen here, right? Let me turn up my kerosene lamp and I'll reread that. Not only could it happen here, it was happening here. For two cents, I'd get TOM to shoot another President, how many was it, 26? However, I couldn't contact him and wondered if he was getting by ok in Palmdale. He had that PowerBOSS 7kw generator but could he afford gas? Without the internet, I couldn't look up the price of gas and even knowing what it was wouldn't do him any good. (Around \$1.61/gallon-TOM)

When I got called into the office and informed them about what was going to happen, I felt like, *you gotta be kidding me*. Why in the name of God would anyone even consider doing something that stupid during the winter? It would have been bad enough in the summer, but the winter? Convection heat is a thing of the past and furnaces these days generally require electricity to run the fan, etc. For sure an electric furnace won't do you a bit of good with the power down. Most gas stoves won't start unless they plugged into an electrical connection, but you can usually work around that. About the only appliance in a home I can think of that isn't wired up is a gas fueled hot water heater with a pilot light. And, that's not saying that electricity isn't involved, just that it isn't connected to an electrical connection. Thermocouples generate their own power.

I was far more concerned about Evan than I let on. I knew he had money with him to buy more fuel and a company credit card. If the power were out, neither would do him much good unless he found a truck stop with a generator and used his emergency cash

supply. A three phase generator, no less, fuel pumps are industrial units and generally require 3 phase electricity.

With the coal cars set in place around the Lodge, we began using a runabout on the lake to get back and forth from the Station. We had to open a small hole in that razor wire concertina, but that was no big deal. Guarding the Station was not without problems. We took two portable generators to the Lodge to power the refrigerators and freezers. We also scrounged up some 5 gallon fuel cans which were filled from our lifetime supply of diesel fuel. It took 9.25ml of PRI-D per 5-gallon fuel can and we'd add it to the can before we filled it. Unfortunately, we didn't have the 175-gallons of PRI-D that it would take to stabilize the contents of the big tank. I was pretty sure the company hadn't had it stabilized when it was delivered; they only planned to burn it. It wasn't bunker oil like they burned on old ships.

When Evan headed out on that last run, we didn't know whether the injunction would be issued or not. He should have been headed home by the time the power plants had shut down and since he hadn't arrived home yet, we wondered if he were stuck somewhere or had taken another load. Truckers aren't allowed to carry firearms, although many do. Evan only had the 3 weapons, the MAK-90 in 5.56x45mm, the 9mm pistol and the .22 rifle. Like all truckers, he carried the tire checker that looked a lot like a miniature aluminum baseball bat.

Evan showed up, just as we were putting the finishing touches on the barricade around the cabin, with a broad smile on his face. He'd managed to refill his tank the night just before the power went down and with full tanks, agreed to take another load, provided it was destined near home. It was going to Kansas City, to a grocery wholesaler. He said the wholesaler was so appreciative that his people forgot to unload everything. In the back of his trailer were an assortment of LTS foods, rice, beans and cornmeal. The staff of life! He dropped his trailer and we went to the Station to refill his tanks, adding PRI-D followed by the diesel fuel.

Since I couldn't use the P-14, I gave him the one assigned to me to use and one of the M4s, also mine, but not in .308 NATO. Evan could shoot all the poodles he wanted. He took an immediate liking to the Bushmaster. The MAK-90, in comparison, was a piece of junk.

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Few radio stations remained on the air because they didn't have power or couldn't get fuel for their backup generators. We could pick up one station so we knew when TSHTF. It's not what you think, it was worse. Violence broke out around the country, just like we thought it would. Some of those good ole boys just had to drag their guns into the mess. That was the opportunity that the Brady Bunch and all of the anti-gunners had been waiting for. The president who said he wasn't out to get the guns, tried to get the guns.

It was like your worst nightmare, the list of banned weapons included all semi-automatic anything's, anything that used a military caliber cartridge; I'd go on, but the list is just too long. The exceptions were military and law enforcement, acting in their official capacities, whatever that means. Private security forces had to have official sanction of local law enforcement, preferably by making the private security force reserve officers/deputies. The minute I heard the announcement, I radioed Sheriff Oberkrom and explained my problem, shooters with handguns and all kinds of semi autos.

"Can you get them all to the radio?"

"Everyone or just the ones who aren't members of the security force?"

"Everyone who is not a member of the security force and are over age 21."

"I'll call you back when they're assembled."

I know it's off the subject, but we had more than one Caterpillar tractor. We had three, a CAT D-9, and 972 and 854 loaders. Just thought I'd mention that.

"Amanda, get everyone over the age of 21 down to the Station ASAP."

"Ok, why?"

"We just heard an announcement on the radio; Obama's going for the guns. I radioed Sheriff Oberkrom and he said to get everyone not a member of the security force around the radio and call him back."

"Bekah, too?"

"Ten and a half going on sixteen? Oh what the hell, we'll fake it, bring her too."

"Sheriff, this is Bob, we're ready."

"Raise your right hands and repeat after me..."

Somehow I don't believe Sheriff Oberkrom had any idea he was making a 10 year old a reserve deputy. When he was done, he asked how many badges we would need because he wasn't sure he had enough. When I told him, he said he'd drive up to Kansas City and pick up more. He'd have to have a Deputy drop them off; he had a lot of angry people in Clinton and he assumed it would spread.

It was only mid-March and we'd worked our butts off, literally, doing what we could to protect both the Station and the Lodge. The president was doing everything except cutting his nose off to spite his face and who knows, that might have been better than what he was doing. TOM and I go back a ways and most of his stories seemed to involve WW III. Not a conventional WW III, a GTW. For all he had done when he'd taken office,

FDR hadn't gotten the US economy out of the Great Depression. We emerged from the Great Depression in 1943, halfway through WW II.

TOM made a comment on Frugal's about Obama's *New Deal*, referring to the 2.5 million new jobs he said he'd create by 2011. He had more problems than just unemployment, the people who still had power for their homes were probably the same people who had a gun safe filled with outlawed firearms. Check any survivalist website, oops, check that, do it when the internet comes back up, and you should see that many of the preppers are prepared for most, if not all, events. That's what a preppers does, stores food, equipment and skills they will need when TSHTF. I didn't have nearly as much as I did before I moved, but Amanda and I had worked hard to catch up. That's why her dad and mother had the MAK-90 and 9mm pistol. When the Deputy delivered the badges later in the week, we put up Bekah's until she was old enough.

Surveying the state of our preparations, we'd done all we could to protect the Station. The same applied to the Lodge, with a single exception, no shelter. I wasn't sure how we'd do that, but there were still several coal cars. What if we removed some of the soil from the bank that ran from the road down to the lake? It's better to be over prepared than under prepared, so we kept the excavator going to create an excavation in the area beside the Lodge, 55' wide and as long as we could make it.

The coal cars aren't actually much wider than the rail gauge, maybe 5' wide. Eleven of them placed side by side would create a shelter 55' square or a smidgen over 3,000ft². We lacked several things that we'd need to equip the shelter after it was completed. A blast door, an air filtration system, a bigger power supply because we'd have more things to power and so forth. I was, simply put, between a rock and a hard spot. If we had a diesel fueled generator, we had 350,000-gallons of #2 diesel fuel which we could stabilize and should last for a few weeks.

I couldn't check with my boss about buying a generator and wasn't sure if the Cummins dealer in Kansas City, Cummins Central Power, LLC, would accept a purchase order I issued. I found blank purchase orders in the Manager's Secretary's desk. How about simply renting one? There would probably be some base monthly fee plus an hour's used fee. I talked it over with those 3 turbine guys and one thought a rental would likely fly. He said to get the smallest they had in stock.

The one they had was a C60D6RT, 60kw standby, 55kw prime power, rated at about ~250 amps, single phase 120/240. They took the purchase order, hooked it to my ball hitch and suggested a supply of oil and filters. The actual generator was the DGCG and it took 12 quarts of oil per change plus a spin on oil filter, a spin on 10 micron fuel filter and a dry replacement air filter element. I pretty much filled the back of my Ford F250 with oil and filters. Once done, Evan and I beat feet back to the Lodge and we wired the trailer mounted generator into the 200 amp power panel.

That was worth a celebration, if we'd had the time, however we didn't because we still had to place those coal cars upside down after moving to the Lodge and removing the

bogies ("trucks"). While we in KC, we used the yellow pages to find a HEPA filter supplier and bought those on yet another KCPL purchase order. About the only thing the company didn't have and something I couldn't see how to justify was Amateur radios and antennas. Fortunately I did have one radiation meter, a CD V-715 and almost enough KIO₃ from my days when I was the Executive Officer of a company that supplied the product. Man, if we needed that stuff, we were in deep do-do.

After the Deputies and Troopers ran off the protesters, we had no more visitors for some time and some of us began to feel that the company had made much ado over nothing. Then, a fella from KC showed up with our paychecks and made some refreshing comments about the steps we took to protect the Station. I gave him a brief rundown on the various things we'd done to secure both the Station and Lodge. Gritting my teeth, I handed him copies of the Purchase Orders.

"Oh good, you rented a unit rather than buying it outright; good thinking. Did they pick up the coal cars?"

"That's what we used to reinforce the fence and build that shelter I mentioned."

"I'd like to see that, if you don't mind."

"I think it's safe to drive up there, we haven't been bothered for a while. Let me warn you, it's still pretty rough, we haven't added any furnishings."

"What do you need?"

"Something to sit on and to sleep on might be a good start."

"Get some folding chairs to sit on and pick up some surplus military bunk beds to sleep on. Fill out a PO for the bunks and I'll sign it. Do the same for some folding chairs and folding tables. Can you move one of the propane stoves down there?"

"I'd rather have an electric stove."

"Ok fine, but don't let's go overboard, a PO for a stove, but that's it."

"Here we are."

"Coal cars?"

"Well yeah, it's what we had. I figure we can pull them out after this is all over. The same goes for the cars we used to build the shelter, which will just take longer. When I left this morning, they didn't have the place wired up so we'll probably need flashlights."

We grabbed two MagLites and headed down the ramp that led to the shelter entrance. The men had been busy, by offsetting one side panel; they had avoided cutting it to

create a door. They also had six feet of earth over parts of the shelter. Three feet of earth gave us a protection factor of 1,024. The tenth-value thickness, in inches, for steel is 3.3; for concrete, 11; for earth, 16; for water, 24; and, for wood, 38. That means that where you have those thicknesses you'll have only $\frac{1}{10}$ as much gamma radiation pass through with that barrier material. Six feet of earth was 72" and 72 divided by 16 was 4.5. Ten raised to the 4.5 power was 31,622.78; not bad, if I say so myself.

The Lodge – Chapter 4

Let's just stick with $\frac{1}{2}$ values, shall we? Thirty-six inches is ten times 3.6 inches, ergo, 0.5 raised to the tenth power which equals 1,024. So, 72 inches must equal 0.5 raised to the twentieth power or 1,048,576. Hell, that sounds better than 31 thousand, so let's go with that. I don't do too many spreadsheets, but Excel made it easy to confirm the number 1,024. I just took it one step further and 0.5 to the 20th power and got a million. A million here, a million there... While we were down there, the final electrical connection was made and the fluorescent lights turned on. It was a thing of beauty and big too.

"You can move one or both refrigerators and freezers down here as you see fit. I can't see that you're going to need this shelter, but as long as you have it and can reassemble the coal cars, leave it for now."

"Why would you assume that we won't need it? The US economy is in the tank and the new president hasn't exactly endeared himself to those who elected him; and, I might add, especially not to the people who voted for McCain."

"What does that have to do with a bomb shelter?"

"My friend TOM claims that there are several potential causes of war: starvation, a desire to increase the size of your county, differences in religion and economics. Nearly every country in the world's economies has tanked. Ask yourself, who is best prepared for a war and who is least prepared? Russia and China have the most protection and of all the major industrialized nations we have the worst."

"Well, I'm not too worried about it; I have a residential backup generator."

"Diesel? Propane?"

"Natural gas."

"Do you have a shelter?"

"We just have the basement."

"You can make that into a good improvised shelter. You should stock up on food too. I hope I'm wrong; but who knows? One other thing, KCPL received a warning that terrorists may take advantage of the situation and strike several small power plants, just to prove that no one can stop them."

"What's the deal on the appeal?"

"The circuit court reversed and the US Attorney General filed an immediate appeal. SCOTUS granted Cert and issued an immediate stay order for the Appellate Court ruling. Sort of like what they did when reviewing the 2000 election. We should know some-

thing soon. You're going to have a whole lot of work to do reassembling those railcars if the decision comes out in our favor."

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We were overcrowded in the Lodge even if we hot bunked it. We could either forget about using the 3 car garage as cold storage for our food supply, we could subdivide the garage into 2 bays for sleeping with a woodstove for heat and one bay kept cold for storage, or move the cots into the cafeteria in the power Station. We should probably keep the families in the Lodge. We could still use the Lodge for food preps but with a genset, the microwaves and fridges in the cafeteria would be an asset.

I suppose the final decision was mine although it affected so many people, I decided to put it up for discussion. After I cautioned everyone that I would make the final decision, I put it on the floor. Someone brought up the idea of using the garage and another moving the single people to the Station cafeteria. A third person suggested that it wasn't a problem, simply move the singles to the now completed shelter. Now that made sense; we'd already moved all of the food from the cafeteria to the Lodge.

"I like that last idea, but we'd better get moving if we're going to get those surplus bunk beds that I have a genuine PO to acquire. We'll also get folding chairs and tables. I didn't get a PO for bed linens, but I risk issuing one for enough plain muslin sheets to provide two sets for every bunk. We'll use the washer and dryer in the Lodge to do the laundry. I think we can do it military style and have a weekly linen exchange. Any questions?"

There were none so I got Evan to hook up his empty trailer and two of my best to ride shotgun. Well, they took their shotguns, rifles and pistols with plenty of reloads for each. The company man said he'd smooth the way for the bunks and other things and have them assembled in a company warehouse. It turned out that he must have had about the same thought about bed linen. There were two sets of muslin sheets and a blanket for each bed. Pillowcases come in pairs, you know. There was even what he could scrape together for spare rations although those had to be divided among several plants. Damn this Just in Time Delivery system.

While Evan and the others were up in KC, we began building fighting positions along the lakefront. It was the only area of the Station compound not protected by the ¼" aluminum panels from the railcars. Because of his warning; and, as ludicrous as it sounds, we used the leftover lumber to build three guard towers to see over the fence.

I also wondered about the company man and his natural gas fueled standby generator. In my experience, power outages didn't seem to affect the natural gas, but was that an absolute? Propane was stored in a tank in your backyard; the natural gas came in a pipe from somewhere else. And, when the propane dealer came out to check our propane tank and top it off, I asked what size we had.

“That’s a 1,100 gallon tank but we only do a 90% fill or about 1,000 gallons. Why; don’t you think you have enough?”

“If I gave you a company PO, could you install a second 1,100 gallon tank?”

“I can and will, but that’s just foolishness.”

“Humor me?”

“I suppose you want it installed, plumbed and filled?”

“It wouldn’t be much good if it weren’t.”

“We’ll be out around 9am tomorrow, just have that PO ready. Do you have a crane?”

“Would a Cat 854G with a bucket do?”

“It should work just fine, I have straps, and you can supply the chains.”

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I’ll say this much, they were prompt. The two cradles and the tank were on a 5 ton truck along with an assortment of pipes and such. They placed the cradles, set the tank in place and did the plumbing, using a Tee and a valve to connect the two gas lines. He then put 1,000 gallons of propane in the second tank and I gave him the purchase order. They were gone well before lunch. Our next task was to unload Evan’s truck and place the things they brought back into the shelter.

While having a bomb shelter is never a bad idea, I wondered if I’d gone too far. The company man hadn’t said that I had and even complemented me on renting rather than buying the portable generator. The hitch on my F-250 can be either a ball hitch or a pintle hitch; I carry both in the truck. It’s as simple as pulling a pin, inserting the other hitch and reinserting the pin.

A tow hitch (or tow bar) is a device attached to the chassis of a vehicle for towing or a tow bar to an aircraft nose gear, or paired main gears. It can take the form of a tow-ball to allow swiveling and articulation of a trailer, or a tow pin and jaw with a trailer loop - often used for large or agricultural vehicles where slack in the pivot pin allows the same movements. Another category is the towing pintle used on military vehicles worldwide.

One problem we had was communications. In Security we had 4 handheld radios, i.e. 2 Motorola HT750s and 2 older Motorola CT250s. I kept one of the CT250s with me. Those radios were in the (UHF) range about 465Mhz. The Station personnel used a Motorola trunked radio system in the 900 MHz range. We had one of those handhelds in the Security office also. Without power the trunked system didn't work but they could

still transmit radio to radio. Then to make it all complete, Public Safety and EMS in this area mostly broadcast in the 155 MHz range (VHF).

Luckily I did have a bank of radios in my truck that included a Motorola MaxTrak radio with the Public Safety frequencies programmed into it. I also had an Icom dual band (ham) radio and a CB w/SSB. I had installed them back when I worked in emergency services in Utah and had just left them in place when I moved to Missouri. Amanda had been trying to talk me into taking them out of my truck because they hit her in the knee when she rode shotgun with me. Now we were glad that I never got around to it. We could communicate but it took coordination and tied up some personnel.

I love it when a plan comes together. That's a quote from Hannibal Smith of *The A-Team*. I say that our plan was coming along even better than I had a right to imagine. We could protect the Station until SCOTUS decided that the president had exceeded his authority and got the coal plants running again. I was concerned that they might not decide that he had, in fact, exceeded his authority. Therein lay the problem with Executive Orders.

US Presidents have issued executive orders since 1789. Although there is no Constitutional provision or statute that explicitly permits executive orders, there is a vague grant of "executive power" given in Article II, § 1 of the Constitution and the statement "take Care that the Laws be faithfully executed" in Article II, § 3. Most executive orders are orders issued by the President to US executive officers to help direct their operation, the result of failing to comply being removal from office.

Until the 1950s, there were no rules or guidelines outlining what the president could or could not do through an executive order. However, the SCOTUS ruled in *Youngstown Sheet & Tube Co. v. Sawyer* that EO 10340 from President Harry S. Truman placing all steel mills in the country under federal control was invalid because it attempted to make law, rather than clarify or act to further a law put forth by the Congress or the Constitution. Presidents since this decision have generally been careful to cite which specific laws they are acting under when issuing new executive orders.

Wars have been fought upon executive order, including the 1999 Kosovo War during Clinton's second term in office. However, all such wars have had authorizing resolutions from Congress. The extent to which the president may exercise military power independently of Congress and the scope of the War Powers Resolution remain unresolved constitutional issues, although all Presidents since its passage have complied with the terms of the Resolution while maintaining that they are not constitutionally required to do so.

The question would be whether Obama exceeded his authority like Truman had. Would the answer depend upon how many the power outage had hurt or was it strictly a legal question where what he did was illegal because Congress hadn't passed enabling legislation? They had, after the fact, passed enabling legislation, voting strictly along party lines. He had signed the bill, again, after the fact of the EO. I guess the worst case sce-

nario was them ruling against him and him issuing a new EO within the purview of the legislation.

We had moved one of the portable generators back to the Station after we brought home the rental unit and were at least able to keep our radios charged. During the nighttime we could light several lights pointed outward from the Station in case the warning turned out to be true. It was a 12kw China diesel, a \$4,000 piece of junk I thought. It had a single cylinder engine but was rated at 103 amps at 120v. It was like a Timex watch, it just kept ticking.

Why is it that the BGs (Bad Guys) always have something like RPG-7s and all we have are rifles, shotguns and pistols? We must shop at the wrong store. If the San Francisco Police Department can have LAW rockets, why can't we? I know they have them, I saw *The Enforcer*. I'd rather quote Dirty Harry than Hannibal Smith anyway. Take Harry's advice not Kate's, it's a bad idea to stand behind a LAW.

Now, you take San Francisco (please), the only people up there with guns are the cops and criminals so that makes it easy. If he/she is not wearing a badge, they're a bad guy. For years, Missouri didn't allow concealed carry, remember *Unintended Consequences*? We have 50 states and the District of Columbia, meaning there are 52 different sets of gun laws in the US. For all practical purposes each state has different laws ranging from California where they have an approved list of handguns and a list of illegal long arms to places that allowed machineguns as long as the BATFE would issue you a stamp.

I only moved here recently, but from what I could tell, Missouri allowed machineguns that the BATFE approved. The way I read the law, it said, *It is unlawful to knowingly possess, manufacture, transport, repair or sell a machinegun without the appropriate federal license. A machinegun is any firearm that is capable of firing more than one shot automatically, without manual reloading, by a single function of the trigger. It is unlawful to knowingly possess, manufacture, transport, repair or sell any rifle of less than 16 inch barrel length, shotgun of less than 18 inch barrel length, rifle or shotgun of less than 26 inch overall length, any silencer, any switchblade, or explosive bullets. The use or possession of 'metal penetrating bullets' during the commission of a crime is a felony.*

The Lodge – Chapter 5

Did I read that right; you can have a machinegun but no silencer?

Except, we were Reserve Deputies and could have anything we wanted, as long as the Sheriff signed off on Department letterhead. Do you suppose that covers destructive devices like LAW rockets and hand grenades? Not flash bangs, real grenades like M67 Defensive and Mk3A2 Offensive grenades. The Sheriff already has some gas and flash bangs. Could we use a KCLP PO with the Sheriff's letter, assuming he'd sign one? I was afraid to ask and even more than afraid to raid an armory looking for some.

"Montrose to Sheriff."

"Go Montrose."

"Is the Sheriff available?"

"Wait one."

"What do you want Bob, having trouble?"

"Negative. We had a company guy who brought our paychecks. While he was here he said that KCPL received a warning that terrorists may take advantage of the situation and strike several small power plants, just to prove that no one can stop them. They could be using RPG-7s and I wouldn't mind having some rockets to protect the Station. And, while I'm at it, I figure I should go for broke and try and persuade you to authorize the purchase of some grenades."

"We have flash bangs, CS and some smoke, won't they do?"

"I was thinking more along the lines of M67s and Mk3A2s plus LAW rockets."

"The Army doesn't use them anymore."

"True, but the Marine Corps do."

"What do you need from me?"

"We need a letter on your letterhead authorizing the purchase."

"I'm not buying that stuff!"

"We'll buy it on a company PO as Reserve Deputies protecting the Power Station."

"And what happens to them when this is over?"

“Two choices: keep them at the Station under lock and key or turn them over to you.”

“Law enforcement doesn’t use things like that.”

“San Francisco does, haven’t you seen *The Enforcer*?”

“That Dirty Harry movie? I saw it but it was just a movie.”

“Are you sure?”

“Not entirely, no. How many do you need?”

“How about 72 of each model of grenade and 30 rockets. I presume you can supply flash bangs and gas?”

“Don’t have enough for our own use; I’ll add a purchase of 72 of each model of those, too.”

“One last thing.”

“What?”

“We want suppressors for some of our rifles.”

“What am I getting myself into? How many, what caliber and which brands.”

“I put together a list and bring it into Clinton.”

“Do you have an armorer to install those suppressors or will you need our armorer to do it?”

“Does your armorer have the necessary equipment?”

“Yes.”

“Then we’ll get your guy to do it for us and he can note the makes, models and serial numbers.”

The list I made up included six 5.56mm suppressors and eight 7.62mm suppressors. While I prefer the Surefire brand, we’d settle for whatever we could find. It required another trip to KC and the only brand we could get were those made by Advanced Armaments Corporation. Some of the personally owned AR-15 had 20” barrels, including some of those Colt HBARs, reasonably accurate out to 400 meters or so. So, between the company purchased weapons, the personal firearms and the new items the Sheriff allowed us to purchase, we should be able to hold our own should someone attack the

Station. Although most of us thought it was unlikely, that time worn saw reminded us; *would you rather have it and not need it or need it and not have it?*

The Sheriff got a complete list of our purchases and listed them as property assigned to the Reserve Deputies guarding the Montrose Station. Within two weeks, SCOTUS issued an interim order reopening the coal fueled power plants pending a final ruling. We immediately began to reassemble the coal cars, but realized it would take some time. The easiest to assemble were those behind the power Station fence and we did those.

Next, we struggled to disassemble the shelter and upright those cars and move them back to the Station before replacing the sides. Finally, using all three of our heavy treads, we pulled the cars surrounding the Lodge. Because they were filled with soil and bottom ash, they took the longest. After, we had to pull the train tracks we'd laid to the Lodge and reassemble the ties and tracks we'd removed to build the two miles of track to the Lodge.

On top of that, the Station operators had returned to work and they began to bring the plants back online one at a time. Each plant, the oilers and turbines had to be inspected before they could be restarted, a process that lasted over 3 weeks. During that time, I got a call concerning the rental generator unit. I was instructed to keep it for the time being. I explained about the improvements we'd like to make to improve Station security and the only important question was, "How much?"

I was shocked with that response and asked.

"It seems that that warning hadn't been lifted by the Department of Home Insecurity. If and when it is, we'll work out something; perhaps transfer those extras to the Henry County Sheriff. Have you gotten the coal cars reassembled and the track back in place?"

"It will be close to 10 days before we're done with that. All three plants are now up and running."

"Full output?"

"At the moment, but it would be better for you to talk to the Station manager."

"I will. You had to take apart that shelter and the barrier around the Lodge didn't you?"

"We did and it was a real challenge."

"Good. It seems to be a shame you have a space for a shelter but no shelter nor any protective fencing. We're going to authorize the company that put in the Station security fence to put in the same around the Lodge. We'll also contract to have the shelter replaced using concrete block construction with a heavy roof and covered over like it was before."

“We can probably handle the cover part; there are few things that would be nice to add, if we could.”

“Ok, what?”

“My girlfriend’s mother is an EMT, but we don’t have a lot of medical supplies. We only have one used survey meter that belongs to me and a few dosimeters. I like to get the necessary equipment for the shelter and put up a larger supply of food. I don’t care what kind of amateur band radio we get, but it could become important.”

“Send me a list with the items and an explanation of why you want them. At the moment, Great Plains Energy has authorized each Station to implement such precautions as may be necessary to protect our Stations. Is there anything more I need to know? You didn’t buy artillery pieces or anything did you?”

“Everything we have is classified as an individual weapon by the armed forces. I’m not fond of those M-4s though and would be happier if we all had .308 NATO caliber rifles.”

“What’s wrong with the M-4s?”

“Besides we don’t have any poodles to shoot and that short barrel limits the effective range? Nothing I suppose. For every pro there’s at least one con.”

“Let’s see what you want in terms of equipment and supplies. If there is any of what I’ve budgeted for you, we’ll get the rifles you want. Say, the Sheriff mentioned that he made all of you Reserve Deputies for the duration, what was that about?”

“Reserve Deputies can have those weapons prohibited to regular civilians but not Law Enforcement and military.”

“Alright, we leave that be for the moment, but as soon as this is over, we’ll probably change that. I’m not saying we’ll totally eliminate the armed guard force, but you forks aren’t trained law enforcement officers. One last thing, commencing next week we’ll be bring in larger loads of coal so find someplace to pile it. Our goal has been changed to accumulating a full one year supply of coal for the Station or 2.4 million tons”

Damn, we be butt deep in coal and would probably have to extend the fence around the Station the extra ½ mile to the property line to stack the coal piles within the fence boundaries.

*Half a league, half a league,
Half a league onward,
All in the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.
"Forward, the Light Brigade!"*

*"Charge for the guns!" he said:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred.*

*"Forward, the Light Brigade!"
Was there a man dismay'd?
Not tho' the soldier knew
Someone had blunder'd:
Their's not to make reply,
Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do and die:
Into the valley of Death
Rode the six hundred*

*Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon in front of them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
Boldly they rode and well,
Into the jaws of Death,
Into the mouth of Hell
Rode the six hundred.*

*Flash'd all their sabres bare,
Flash'd as they turn'd in air,
Sabring the gunners there,
Charging an army, while
All the world wonder'd:
Plunged in the battery-smoke
Right thro' the line they broke;
Cossack and Russian
Reel'd from the sabre stroke
Shatter'd and sunder'd.
Then they rode back, but not
Not the six hundred.*

*Cannon to right of them,
Cannon to left of them,
Cannon behind them
Volley'd and thunder'd;
Storm'd at with shot and shell,
While horse and hero fell,
They that had fought so well
Came thro' the jaws of Death
Back from the mouth of Hell,*

*All that was left of them,
Left of six hundred.*

*When can their glory fade?
O the wild charge they made!
All the world wondered.
Honor the charge they made,
Honor the Light Brigade,
Noble six hundred.*

Copied from Poems of Alfred Lord Tennyson

The Lodge – Chapter 6

From all outward appearances, the SCOTUS was either postponing or unable to reach a decision concerning the appeal before them. For a brief period of time, things almost returned to normal. Well, as normal as they could be in the circumstances. As the power was brought back online, factories began to reopen, refineries began to process crude oil and retailers refilled their shelves from stocks of overproduced goods that they hadn't been able to transport from their warehouses to stores.

Everyone with a job that still existed returned to it and soon people had some money to spend. One commodity that was doing a land office business was standby generators. When Cummins offered to sell KCPL the rental unit outright, they bought it. A second slightly larger unit, circa 150kw was installed at the Station to service the three units. The shelter was up in a matter of days with the plumbing installed, roof poured, electricity installed and a genuine multi-bank American Safe Rooms Ventilation System and blast door in place.

We only received about half the food I'd indicated we should have, one year for the employees, not including the families, as I had suggested. The firearms I had asked for, 12 ea shotguns, rifles and pistols were limited to number requested and they were standard model M1As, 590A1 shotguns and Springfield Armory GI High Capacity .45s, not P-14s. That exhausted our budget.

It wasn't hard to make an adjustment to the supplies for my family by shopping some places we knew about that ran great sales. Several of the other employees with families did the same. The class III portions of our armory were inventoried by the Sheriff and kept locked in the shelter armory. KCPL continued to provide ammo for practice, mostly commercial 147gr FMJ or 62gr FMJ M855 (SS-109) and 230gr Lawman .45ACP.

DHI went from Red to Orange as the power came back on, but didn't lower the threat level below Orange. We maintained somewhere between Orange and Red at the Montrose Station, not trusting DHI or that Arizona Governor Obama had picked. Not long after, DHI (DHS) indicated that the number of federal military troops attached to DHI was

being increased a third time, from 40,000 to 60,000 or roughly 3 full Divisions. There, somehow, someone slipped in that provision that originally appeared the John Warner Defense Appropriations Act and repealed a year later back in, allowing the president to suspend Posse Comitatus in case of a National Emergency.

For a while things seemed to be returning to what passed for normal. In a 100 plus page decision, the SCOTUS voted that Obama had exceeded his authority, while at the same time upholding the Coal Phase out with respect to new plants. A full reading of the decision seemed to suggest that with the right legislation, the president could limit CO₂ emissions to a limited extend and that could be on an increasing scale until alternatives were found.

About a week later Great Plains Energy issued a memo detailing the plants to be modified to come into compliance with the expected new rules. Montrose Station wasn't among them. I didn't understand because our Station wasn't that old; and, considering the size wouldn't take much too reduce the emissions. When I asked, I was told that more Stations would be added to the list since some of the Stations being removed were older than ours.

KCPL and all of the Great Plans Energy subsidiaries were now stockpiling like they might never receive another shipment of coal. We continued to maintain tight security and create bigger coal mountains. The new fencing at the Lodge was in and the fencing around the Station was extended to the property boundaries. We sold the accumulated fly ash and bottom ash to make even more room for coal. We'd always have some to sell and they picked it up daily by the semi load. However, they never seemed to take it all.

For the period the power plants had been shut down, we hadn't had any bottom ash to spare but it didn't matter because nobody was building roads. Fly ash is a component added to make cement strong and bottom ash is used as aggregate for either bituminous or concrete roads. Anyway, it always seemed we had more ash than the purchasers could haul.

We were now receiving loads of coal almost continuously and we were running a 24/5 operation unloading the cars. For whatever reason, perhaps the overtime, we didn't receive weekend deliveries. Which I suppose brings us to the economy in a roundabout way. Those months without electricity had taken a toll on the economy that we'd be quite some time getting over. Unemployment had temporarily risen to close to 50% and was now back down to 20% and still falling. Think Great Depression with those rates.

On the day after we finally reached 650,000 tons of coal, and had another train to unload, the president held a press conference concerning the SCOTUS decision overturning his EO. Using the legislation a packed Congress had passed, and after consultation with Nancy and Harry, he issued a new Executive Order, which purportedly fell within the purview of the legislation. It was a schedule of permitted CO₂ emissions. The

schedule provided for a decreasing level over the next 11 years beginning January 1, 2010 and ending December 31, 2020.

Plants were allowed several choices including sequestering (capture) or cleansing. Cleansing meant that the CO₂ had to be divided into its constituent components, Oxygen and Carbon. The carbon would be captured as a solid and disposed of. The Oxygen would be released into the atmosphere along with water vapor. The most polluting component was the water vapor; close, but no cigar.

In order, Earth's most abundant greenhouse gases are:

- Water vapor
- Carbon dioxide
- Methane
- Nitrous oxide
- Ozone
- CFCs

When these gases are ranked by their contribution to the greenhouse effect, the most important are:

- Water vapor, which contributes 36–70%
- Carbon dioxide, which contributes 9–26%
- Methane, which contributes 4–9%
- Ozone, which contributes 3–7%

First off, we need the ozone to fill that hole in the ozone layer. Secondly, we'd been bordering on a drought and more water vapor was needed to resolve that. At most we could only control about 35% of our greenhouse gases, CO₂ and methane. Add the absence of sunspots the last year or so and it was easy to understand why the country had been a sheet of ice for most of the winter. So help me, it's true, Tone Brothers had some garlic salt they intended to take to the Des Moines dump. Either the state of Iowa or the City of Des Moines acquired it and used it to salt the roads.

I got a note from TOM and he claimed that the week before Christmas 2008, they got 9" of snow in Palmdale and Victory Valley got around a foot. I wrote back inquiring how they made it through the snow and the blackout. He replied that they'd yanked the gas log from the fireplace and burned wood. They hadn't lost natural gas, but with only a 7kw portable generator, he'd been jumping to keep everything running. They got just enough gasoline to keep the generator running about 6 hours a day.

I told him a little about what we'd done to secure the Montrose Station and wondered aloud about Great Plains Energy and KCPL investing enough in the Station to keep it in compliance with the new rules. In the email, I listed some of the principal provisions of the new EO. He replied with three words, "lock and load."

Thanks for the advice, but, we already were. The last load of coal was unloaded and a new trainload pulled in. It was a smaller load and only carried a two day supply. The Station manager informed me that from this point forward, we'd only receive enough coal to keep the plant running, about 13,000 tons every other day and about 20,000 tons on Fridays with no weekend deliveries.

The Lodge was no longer occupied although it was becoming well stocked. Smaller additions had been made from the Station's miscellaneous purchases budget to compensate for the company not buying the full amount of food requested. By now, it was, in fact actually overstocked for the number of employees the Station had. I still made the trip three times daily to check on the place, something I'd been doing from the time I'd been hired.

KCPL finally bought in a team to evaluate the Montrose Station emissions. They were found to be slightly above what the new EO would allow. They determined that two or three relatively inexpensive fixes would allow the Station to run through 2015. After that time, a major rebuild would be in order and we'd be at the bottom of the list for Station rebuilds. With the state of the world economy, especially the American economy, I had doubts the Station would be running after 2015.

Pundits had claimed that Obama had selected nearly a perfect cabinet. The only criticism I recall was who he chose to give the invocation. I suspected he did that to appease the country as a whole. However, nearly everyone slammed Rick Warren. It seemed like even before his raised his right hand, Obama had problems. Whoever talked him into issuing that first EO should be hung.

A goal of having clean energy by 2020 was totally unrealistic. Perhaps 2050 would have been more realistic; but Reagan wanted a 600 ship Navy although he never got it. Our goals never wavered; protect the Station at all costs. Periodically, the company reissued the warning notice about the possibility of terrorists attacking the power plants. In each case, I reviewed the current state of our security and reminded some of the guards that just because we hadn't been attacked, didn't mean that we couldn't/wouldn't be.

One asset here was those Kubota RTVs. They are little utility pickups with an enclosed cab and a small pickup bed. They are powered by a diesel motor. I think there are a dozen or so here. I often used one to drive up to the Lodge when I wasn't in a hurry. It allowed me to check the shore between the Station and the Lodge.

With the results of the Station evaluations, the power company execs got on the news and tried to state their case directly to the American people. *We want to bring you power, but the government is going to shut us down. Some of our generating Stations cannot economically meet the president's goals and they are supposed to be shut down by government mandate. We know the government will try to stop us. You need to help defend us by whatever means necessary.*

The result of the speech by the KCPL executives was to trigger a terrorist attack against Montrose Station because it was identified as an example of a Station being forced to close in the future due to the EO. The terrorists, either ragheads or environmentalists, tried to come up the discharge arm waterway on the SW side of the Station. We moved to full alert and I issued an order to repel boarders, because the right command didn't come to mind.

While that fight was going on a lookout on the north side saw inbound traffic. He assumed it was another attack. Some of the force came around and took positions on the north side ready to engage. Just then, they yelled out, "Don't shoot, we're friendlies!" They were KCPL employees who came to join the fight. "This is our home and we'll be damned if they are going to destroy it!" The employees then worked west along the road on the north side of the building to catch the terrorists in a cross-fire.

The attackers didn't have RPGs or any machineguns. They did have a few sticks of dynamite and some King Edward *It's a Boy* cigars. Their weapons were Russian, Chinese or AK clones made in one of the former Russian satellites. Plus, none of them were Middle Eastern, making them eco-terrorists.

The Earth Liberation Front (ELF), also known as "Elves" or "The Elves", is the collective name for anonymous and autonomous individuals or cells who, according to the ELF Press Office, use *economic sabotage and guerrilla warfare to stop the exploitation and destruction of the environment*, commonly known as ecotage or monkey-wrenching.

The ELF was founded in Brighton in the UK in 1992 and spread to the rest of Europe by 1994. It became now an international movement with attacks reported in over a dozen countries and is widely regarded as the Animal Liberation Front's younger sister, because of the relationship and cooperation between the two movements. Using the same leaderless resistance model, as well as similar guidelines to the ALF, sympathizers say that it is an eco-defense group dedicated to taking the profit motive out of environmental destruction by causing economic damage to businesses through the use of direct action.

The ELF was classified as the top domestic terror threat in the United States by the FBI in March 2001, and is categorized as *eco-terrorists*. The ELF's guidelines require that individuals or groups acting on its behalf *take all necessary precautions against harming any animal – human and nonhuman*. On the lack of deaths from ELF attacks, the FBI's deputy assistant director for counterterrorism has said, *I think we're lucky. Once you set one of these fires they can go way out of control*. The name came to public prominence when they were featured on the television show *60 Minutes* in 2005.

We collected the bodies and the wounded and called Sheriff Oberkrom, requesting transport and ambulances. I had to explain that the Station had been attacked by eco-terrorists. He said I was nuts, he didn't have any eco-terrorists in Henry County. I invited him out to see for himself.

The Lodge – Chapter 7

You've heard about the California Supreme Court ruling, right? California's Supreme Court ruled that the state's Good Samaritan law only protects people from liability if they are administering emergency medical care, and that Lisa Torti's attempted rescue of her friend didn't qualify. Justice Carlos Moreno wrote for a unanimous court that a person is not obligated to come to someone's aid. *If, however, a person elects to come to someone's aid, he or she has a duty to exercise due care*, he wrote. Torti had argued that she should still be protected from a lawsuit because she was giving *medical care* when she pulled her friend from a car wreck.

Did I participate in the little shootout? I thought, "Hell yes, I'd waited most of my life for an opportunity to put that M14 to use." I told you before I had a M14, right? The rifle had originally been a select fire, but someone had milled out the auto parts and it was permanently a semi-auto. But, it was only a thought; personally, I would never say that I had been looking forward to shooting someone to anyone. In real life, I would make sure that I mentioned that I was in fear for my life and the lives of my co-workers. I would probably also mention that the terrorists were determined to kill us and I was more determined that they would not succeed. Anything showing too much testosterone will land people in the gray-bar hotel with some suit happy lawyer suing me for everything I had or would ever have or some yahoo saying I had violated their civil rights.

How many coal cars does it take to deliver 20,000-tons of coal? If the 52' car holds about 219,000 pounds, then it holds 109 tons. If you divide 20,000 by 109, you find that it takes about 183 cars and that makes for a train about 10,248' long, just short of two miles long, with or without the engines. I allowed 4' between cars for the couplings on each car, so it might be slightly different and I don't have time to go out and measure one at the moment.

"Sheriff."

"Bob. Eco-terrorists, you say?"

"Well they ain't ragheads. Who else would have anything against a coal fueled plant besides ELF?"

"The president doesn't seem to like coal."

"Neither does Al Gore, and neither of them would get their hands dirty, especially Al Gore."

"You don't like him, do you?"

"Where would you get an idea like that, Sheriff?"

“Could have been something you said. How many dead and how many wounded?”

“Thirteen dead and eight wounded. Sorry about that, I thought my guys could shoot better.”

“I’ll tell you Bob, I don’t really like the idea of having an armed force out here at the Station. I guess this attack proves me wrong. We’ll have to hold a hearing to determine that the shootings were justified. Just the facts, who shot first, why none of your people got so much as one wound, where the Mounties came from.”

“I can answer the last question. They’re Station employees who heard the shooting and came in the north side just to lend a hand.”

“Did you arm them?”

“Hell no. However, I should point out that you Deputized them back when we were shut down, remember?”

“The over the radio thing?”

“Exactly.”

“Crap. I forgot about them when the Station began generating power again. Ah hell, no harm, no foul; this makes it easier.”

“In what way?”

“Well, like you said, these people were clearly eco-terrorists and the Henry County Sheriff’s Office through the auspices of its Reserve Deputies managed to protect the Station that generates, how many, megawatts of power.”

“Five hundred forty.”

“Right, that’s what I said. See to it that you include that in my statement,” the Sheriff said to the only reporter on scene.

The incident made national news and people began showing up at the Station for interviews and to take photos. I saw to it that they were all referred to HQ in Kansas City, Missouri. I didn’t want them revealing our security preparations nor give any other potential attackers ideas about how they might carry off a successful attack. Had they succeeded, they could have cost millions in damage and would have probably shut the plant down permanently. The actual damage to the Station and one particular plant was minimal and that plant was only offline for 6 hours.

The Sheriff was trying to cover his behind with that statement and take a little credit in the process. That was ok with me; his is a politician after all. Plus in a roundabout way,

he gave us more legitimacy in our quest to protect the plant. And, the warning hadn't specified any particular group that might take advantage of the situation and attack us. One terrorist is as bad as any other. We got off lucky, ELF, if they were Elves, had frequently caused millions of dollars of damage in the past.

While my job was normally the day shift, I'd been working more shifts than normal because of the threat and the fact that we had armed guards that I felt responsible to. Once everything settled down, I went home for some much needed sleep.

I tried to be careful not to awake Amanda when I got home, but didn't succeed. Half awake, she asked, "Long day?"

"The Station was attacked."

Now wide awake, she asked, "Are you ok?"

"All of us at the Station are ok. The attackers weren't so lucky."

"Have to shoot one?"

"Killed thirteen and wounded eight."

"What? Who was it, Al Qaeda?"

"Probably ELF."

"I thought that they were the sneaky type and attacked when nobody was around."

"That was their pattern in the past; times change."

"What did Kent (the Sheriff) have to say?"

"He's a politician. When he realized that some of the defenders were Reserve Deputies he swore in over the radio, he tried to make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. There was only one reporter there; he may have pulled it off."

"Which paper?"

"Clinton Daily Democrat."

"I'm wide awake. Do you want something to eat?"

"An omelet might be nice."

"Ham and cheese ok?"

“Whatever you have handy.”

“Toast?”

“Please.”

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After a good night’s sleep, I was ready to talk to Sheriff Kent Oberkrom and stopped by the office on the way to work.

“You said something about a hearing?”

“The County Attorney ruled it a justified shooting; there won’t be any hearing.”

“That was fast.”

“It’s not every day that we have a terrorist attack in Henry County. I caught him at breakfast and filled him in. After I explained everything to him, he said that you were justified. I think them having weapons persuaded him. He did want to know why I had so many Reserve Deputies at the Station. I told him that I trained them, at your request, and I decided to make them Reserve Deputies.”

“That’s correct; as far as it goes. Why about the radio Deputies?”

“What radio Deputies? They never existed as far as I’m concerned; don’t you agree Bob?”

“I suppose you want me to collect their badges?”

“Please, but don’t make a fuss.”

Bekah never knew about her badge so that was the easy part. Amanda, Evan and April didn’t make a fuss. I hung out at the main gate, collecting badges from those that brought them, explaining the why and wherefore. Most didn’t mind and the most common comment was, “I don’t need a badge to protect this Station.”

KCPL decided to rearrange their priorities and bring Montrose Station into full compliance with Obama’s 2020 guidelines. They said it had something to do with *economies of scale* (economies of scale are the cost advantages that a business obtains due to expansion) but in my heart I believe it was because of that Eco-Terrorist attack. Neither did I believe we’d seen the last of the attacks against the Station or the Nation.

The write up in the paper made the Sheriff out to be the real hero of the day and very little was said about the Reserve Deputies at the Station, other than the fact that they existed due to the Sheriff’s foresight. *No one person in the community has more power*

to create respect for the government than an intelligent and sympathetic police officer. This saying has been posted at the Sheriff's Office since Sheriff J. Kent Oberkrom took office in 1996 to remind our staff on a daily basis of their obligation to the citizens that we serve. A law enforcement agency should never be more than what a community wants it to be. To that end, the Henry County Sheriff's Office strives to keep in touch with you to bring the best possible services to you in a timely and efficient manner.

The Sheriff wasn't anyone's fool and if you get that impression of him, I've misreported the facts. Henry County only has a population of around 25,000 or less and it's very rural. Like I said, the Sheriff doesn't have that large of a staff, 28 counting the Sheriff and his Chief Deputy.

Clinton also has a Police Department and the Chief is Kevin Miller. With a city of only 9,000 or so, it isn't the largest Police Department. The city bills itself as *Where the lake meets the trail*. The reference is to Truman Lake and the Katy Trail. As the northern gateway to Truman Lake, the state's second-largest lake, Clinton, Missouri each year attracts thousands of visitors with its natural beauty and recreation options, from hiking to boating to fishing to hunting.

Truman Lake covers 56,000 acres and is managed by the US Army Corps of Engineers. Nearby public use areas include Sparrowfoot and Bucksaw, both of which include a boat launch, campground, beach, dock and playground. Bucksaw also has a marina. Cooper Creek Off-Road Vehicle Area south of town boasts 400 acres for dirt bikes, AT-V's and dune buggies.

Katy Trail State Park is the longest developed rail-trail in the country. Katy Trail State Park attracts people of all ages and interests. Whether you are a bicyclist, walker, equestrian, nature lover or history buff, the Trail offers opportunities for recreation, a place to enjoy nature and an avenue to discover the past.

The park, built on the former corridor of the Missouri-Kansas-Texas Railroad (MKT or Katy), is 225 miles long and runs from Clinton to St. Charles with 26 trailheads and two fully restored depots along the way. The section of trail between Cooper and St. Charles has been designated as an official segment of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail. Katy Trail is also part of the American Discovery Trail and has been designated as a Millennium Legacy Trail.

Trail users get the opportunity to wind through some of the most scenic areas of the state with the majority of the trail closely following the Missouri River. The park also takes users through a slice of rural history as it meanders through small towns that once thrived along the railroad corridor and reflect the rich heritage of Missouri. Information at the trailheads makes a ride or a walk on the Katy not only a healthy adventure, but also an educational one. I'm trying to put together everything new to me. I pulled the info off the city website and corrected the misspellings.

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KCPL completed the plant upgrades over the course of a year. They used sequestration to remove the CO₂ and connected to a CO₂ pipeline that ran all the way to Canada where the CO₂ was injected into oil wells. That particular project first came to the fore in North Dakota. Started in 2000, Weyburn is located on an oil reservoir discovered in 1954 in Weyburn, Saskatchewan, Canada. The CO₂ for this project is captured at the Great Plains Coal Gasification plant in Beulah, North Dakota which has produced methane from coal for more than 30 years. At Weyburn, the CO₂ will also be used for enhanced oil recovery with an injection rate of about 1.5 million metric tons per year. The first phase finished in 2004, and demonstrated that CO₂ can be stored underground at the site safely and indefinitely.

I'm sorry, but I don't actually know what process was used to remove the CO₂. Gasification? My job was security, not engineering, that's just a guess. The company had mixed feelings about the attack and its outcome. However, someone realized that it was only due to the forethought that went into establishing an armed Security Force that they still had a plant. I half expected a bonus, but they called it even and let us keep our guns.

KCPL had expended a significant amount of funds when all things were considered. They had fences built, a shelter built and equipped, procured firearms and a few kinds of ordnance they knew nothing about. As a result of the attack, they spent megabucks upgrading the plant to 2020 standards and getting a section of pipeline installed. The plant, as modified, met the standards required by the legislation for new coal plants.

While we generally kept the gates open for the trainloads of coal, we were prepared to close them at a moment's notice. We had bigger problems to worry about than additional terrorist attacks. The economy continued to falter, perhaps in large part due to the shutdown of coal plants.

As far as Station Security personnel were concerned, by the time I was done with them, they were all CERT trained and had passed EMT-B. That later proved to be a blessing, but that's a story for another time. TOM would probably hate writing this story because it lacked 3 disasters and didn't include WW III. Sorry, buddy, that's all that happened, up until now.

If and when WW III happens, he won't be able to write the story and post it because the internet will be down. I have the CD with his and Fleataxi's stories, so I can compare what he said would happen with what actually happens. He probably wasn't even close. In real life the first time he'd tried to salvage, he probably would get his butt shot off by the USMC up at MCLB, Barstow.

He won't be able to get there anyway, they own a 2008 Nissan Versa with electronic everything. Since Palmdale is close to LA, EMP will kill their car. On the upside, as long as he has a filter, they'll have water, the CA Aqueduct isn't that far from where they live. Plus, like I said, he does have a 7kw generator and lives less than a mile from a service station.

So, Amanda and I finally got the knot tied after I got the old one untied. That took a while and that, too, is another story. I got out of it with my Ford, rifle, shotgun, pistol and my luggage; and, yes, it was worth it. Like TOM says, knowledge is power and nobody can take your knowledge away from you. *Scientia est presencia*

The Lodge – Epilogue

Was my friend always right? Is anyone? He wasn't, but I think that he was right more often than he was wrong. Usually when he didn't know what he was talking about, he looked it up. I'll give him 70-30, maybe more. Thanks, I like it.

That's Bob's story although I don't see why he didn't write it himself. He mostly wrote it with the information he provided and I looked up a few things to fill in the blanks. I liked the premise of the story, that it's possible for TPTB to completely destroy the country. If you think about it, the government doesn't have a lot of choice when it comes to the financial crisis that's tearing the US apart. There are too many jobs involved in letting the industries collapse like they did during the Great Depression.

I found this and it's very interesting. It's about the F-22.

On Dec. 10 The New York Times ran a lengthy story by Christopher Drew about the US Air Force's F-22 fighter, saying that Pentagon plans to terminate production of the plane put President-elect Barack Obama's military and economic goals on a "collision course."

The story noted that 25,000 workers are involved in building the fighter, so ending it could cause economic damage at a time when the next administration will be trying to create the same kind of high-paying jobs elsewhere in the economy.

The actual number of potential job losses from killing the F-22 is closer to 100,000, when both direct and indirect economic impacts are included. Studies have found that manufacturing jobs generate more indirect economic activity than service jobs. But liberals and conservatives alike will rebel against the idea that weapons systems should be built to bolster the economy.

It sounds Orwellian. Liberals don't want an economy driven by war production, and conservatives don't want federal spending to distort market forces. On the other hand, we all want to be defended, and it's inevitable that a \$500 billion defense budget will have some impact on the economy. So maybe the time has come to think seriously about when weapons' spending is good for the economy, and when it isn't.

The Bush administration has always avoided such questions, fearing they would lead to the kind of "industrial policy" associated with centrally planned economies. As a result, the Pentagon has made some decisions in recent years that were potentially disastrous for the broader economy.

For instance, if all of the weapons cuts proposed by Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld had been implemented, every major production line for military aircraft but one would have closed. And as economist Guy DuBois of Raytheon pointed out in a Dec. 8 speech, export restrictions on technologies used in military satellites have caused a steady erosion in the competitiveness of the US space industry. There needs to be a better framework for reconciling economic and security policies.

The logical place to start in crafting a more sensible approach is to agree that the government should not be buying weapons just to stimulate the economy. Weapons programs always should be justified mainly on their operational and fiscal merits, meaning they must satisfy valid military requirements in a cost-effective manner.

The F-22 meets that standard, because it will guarantee global air dominance for the next 30 years – arguably the single most important requirement for winning future wars. There is another fighter in development called the F-35 Joint Strike Fighter that costs only half as much, but that plane lacks the speed, maneuverability and fuel-efficiency to provide as effective a deterrent. The two planes were designed to operate together; however, the US Air Force says it needs more (a total of 383) F-22s to do the job.

Once a system is proven to satisfy valid military requirements in a cost-effective manner, it is reasonable to consider what additional economic benefits its manufacture might generate. For instance, does it preserve vital skills that are fungible across other industrial areas?

The answer in the F-22's case is yes, because the United States still has a big commercial aerospace sector benefiting from the economies of scale created by suppliers and labor forces serving both public and private markets.

Does the F-22 contribute to the nation's trade balance? The answer is yes again – Australia, Israel and Japan all have indicated a desire to buy the plane. So, unlike some military systems that impede industrial efficiency or send US dollars abroad, the F-22 fighter has real economic benefits that ought to be weighed in any government funding decision.

If they do build more, the development costs will be spread over more planes, reducing the overall per unit cost. The Congress approved an increase in our Army and Marines.

The US Army projects it will need \$40 billion annually above current spending levels once a planned 74,200 troops are added, according to a draft service report for the Obama transition team. The report says the planned force of 1.1 million soldiers would require a budget of "\$170 billion to \$180 billion per year to sustain," well above the 2009 budget of about \$140 billion.

Defense News obtained a draft copy of the 43-page document, labeled "pre-decisional" and dated November 2008.

The Bush administration in early 2007 proposed swelling the Army, as well as the Marine Corps, by early next decade. Congress approved the plan. Army officials have hinted for months that a larger force will require a bigger annual budget.

But if service officials have previously estimated the full costs of sustaining the proposed increase thereafter, they have not released the figures.

Independent defense budget analysts have estimated that just recruiting and training 10,000 soldiers costs \$1.2 billion a year. Carrying out the entire proposed increase is expected to cost about \$80 billion through 2013, according to the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and independent budget analysts.

The Army paper, which outlines a broad range of service plans, strategic insights, future needs, goals and potential threats, does not spell out how service officials arrived at their \$170 billion to \$180 billion estimate.

One Army official familiar with service planning said the extra funds would go toward personnel costs and gear.

The CBO has estimated that sustaining the extra forces will cost about \$14 billion per year, far less than the Army report suggests.

At press time, an Army spokesman had yet to respond to requests for further details. Several analysts declined to speculate about the discrepancy with the CBO figures.

The document does explain why senior military officials want a bigger Army: more brigade combat teams. The end-strength increase is “an important element of building resilience back into our force, restoring strategic flexibility,” it says. The extra active, reserve and National Guard troops are needed to meet a service goal of fielding a total of 15 brigade combat teams and “to deal with the most uncertain strategic environment we have ever faced.”

The planned 1.1 million-soldier force could support 20 brigade combat teams and support forces, assuming 12-month active-component deployments and nine-month reserve-component deployments with a 12-month mobilization, the document says. If active and Reserve component units are given three years to five years between deployments, “the planned 1.1 million-soldier force could continuously supply 15 brigade combat teams and their support forces,” it says.

The document is largely a reflection of current status and plans, not a call for changes to be made under a new administration, said Andrew Krepinevich, president and CEO of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Studies, Washington.

“Remember, with [Defense Secretary Robert] Gates’ reappointment, the Army still has the same leadership at the Pentagon. The transition team is not Gates. And the members will not necessarily have positions in the Pentagon. In fact, most will not,” Krepinevich said. “The transition team is there to gather information useful to those who will assume senior positions under Gates. So there does not appear to be a reason for the Army to modify its position from that which it had prior to the election. If it has, I don’t see it here.”

The document says the service is “making progress, but there are [two to three] rough years ahead” in the ongoing effort to repair and restore its war-worn vehicles, helicopters, and other gear. “We have an achievable plan to restore balance to the Army by the end of fiscal 2011. The next two years are critical.”

The document calls the service “out of balance,” meaning the ground force is “feeling the cumulative effects of more than seven years of war in which the demand for forces exceeds the sustainable supply.”

The document mentions almost no specific weapons, save in a few paragraphs and in one chart that lists programs central to Army modernization plans. The most in-depth discussion of its prized Future Combat Systems comes on a page that describes the service's modernization plan.

“Our combat fleet is aging and will require replacement in the next 20 years,” the report says. FCS is “designed to ... meet that goal with an integrated system of systems, and ... enhance the capabilities of our combat formations with ‘spinouts.’”

Service sources said the FCS program office has prepared its own paper about the multibillion-dollar initiative for the transition team.

Some defense analysts have placed the program, run by Boeing and SAIC, on a list of high-dollar defense programs the Obama administration may cut.

The document predicts that the current global fiscal slowdown likely will complicate global security, and predicts a threat picture shaped by the conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, globalization, demographic shifts, resource competition among nations, climate change, natural disasters, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. The service predicts the next administration will primarily face “hybrid threats,” which the document describes as “dynamic combinations of terrorist, irregular, conventional and criminal elements.” But a war against another nation, as opposed to groups like al-Qaida, “cannot be ignored,” it says.

For that reason, the report says, the Army's force must have “utility across the spectrum of conflict.”

While the Army report points to failed and failing states as another top threat, one former Army official discounts such notions.

“The world is full of failed states and always has been. Trying to rectify this situation by governing and developing failed societies, and with American military power, will bankrupt us and change nothing of substance in these regions,” said Douglas Macgregor, a retired Army colonel who writes on military reform for the Center for Defense Information, Washington. “It's time Americans woke up and recognized that so-called [counterinsurgency] in Iraq, along with the nation-building it implies, is a euphemism for territorial imperialism, an economic, military and political loser.”

Part II

The Lodge – Chapter 8

Where do I stand? LOCK AND LOAD.

You know, I thought it was over and sent the material to TOM to write up the story. However, there's an expression, *don't count your chickens before they hatch*. What I'm saying is that the story was far from over and I should have known better. As I said, Amanda and I married and things were sailing along on a fairly smooth ocean. Both Russian and Iran tried their best to test our new president, to no avail.

You have to give the guy credit, while he was inexperienced; he surrounded himself with much more experienced people. He weathered the storm caused by shutting down the coal plants and the industry was more receptive when he came up with that new EO. He somehow managed to separate himself and most of his administration from the problems he bought with him, the crooked Illinois Governor for example.

Despite the fact that he only won the presidency by a small margin in the popular vote, once he got past a few blunders, for all practical purposes, he wasn't any better or worse than several previous presidents. Just as any president, as commander in chief of our armed forces, he had to balance his campaign promises of *change* with the stark reality of the situation.

With the resignation of the leader in Iraq's Parliament, the Status of Forces Agreement with Iraq was firmly worked out and approved by their Parliament and our Senate. The absolute deadline was agreed to as being 12-31-2011. That said, we moved several Brigades from Iraq to Afghanistan in an effort to resolve that conflict. That was a horse of a different color. Pakistan wouldn't cooperate with India over the Mumbai attacks and they wouldn't cooperate with NATO over pursuing the Taliban across their borders.

Slowly, the heat rose over both issues and India was at the point of attacking Pakistan for their refusal to release those associated with the Mumbai attacks. Both countries were small nuclear powers and neither wanted to be the first to use nuclear weapons, leading to a protracted stalemate. We ran into problems with Pakistan when SEAL Team 6 killed Osama bin Laden in their country during 2011.

Eventually Ahmadinejad was booted out of office in Iran and a more moderate president elected. Since Ayatollah Ali Khamenei was the man really running Iran, it mattered not who was president. Iran kept improving their missiles and it was now clear they could hit Israel. They managed to construct three atomic warheads without anyone noticing. Israel had been on something akin to a full alert with their Air Force waiting for orders to take out the Iranian nuclear facilities.

Obama apparently thought he could resolve the problem through diplomacy. There was even precedent, Carter and Clinton claiming the same and eventually resorting to the

use of power. In Carter's case it was the failed rescue mission of our hostages and in Clinton's case he was forced to attack using Tomahawks. Talk is cheap; all it accomplishes is to allow the other side to continue to build their military response.

At one time, some believed in the concept of a limited nuclear war. It was still possible depending on who joined in. The first limited action came during Obama's third year as president when India and Pakistan exchanged nukes. It wasn't a full scale exchange with both countries holding a portion of their weapons in reserve and no other country participating. The estimate was that each country used between 30-40 weapons. Both avoided the Kashmir out of fear of getting China involved.

The next limited nuclear confrontation came not long after when Iran attacked Israel with all three of its completed weapons. Israel intercepted 2 of the 3 sustaining a single hit on Tel Aviv, their financial center. Russia, China and the US went to DEFCON two or the equivalent. We sat on pins and needles until the three began to stand down.

This wasn't the world of the Cold War. Russia had ventured to both South America and Cuba and established aircraft facilities in Cuba and only God knows what in Venezuela. For our part, Obama persuaded Congress to continue procuring F-22 Raptors. His request fell short of the Air Force request of 383 although they did fund a total of 254. All three models of the F-35 Joint Strike fighter were in full production, but it would take some time for the plane to be deployed in large numbers.

One other thing happened that flew in the face of the Army's FCS program; they began construction M1A3 Abrams using the hull from the M1 (they had built a total of about 9,000). The improved tank had the L55 cannon, improved electronics, the LV50-2 updated Crusader engine and improved Chobham armor. Somehow, they managed to limit the weight increase to something a little over 1.5 tons. It solved the problems of the M1A2 SEP, especially in the area of the electronic problems (they tended to overheat).

Further, in anticipation of civil unrest in the US, the full 60,000 troops were assigned to the Dept. of Homeland Insecurity. While Obama still claimed he intended to *get the guns*, he had too many fires to put out to attend to it. From November 5th 2008, the sales of guns and ammo had been on the rise. It was difficult to find any reasonable priced ammo and firearms ordered were backorder for several months. KCPL was able to purchase commercial ammo, although it was pricey.

The UN had seen to it that the sales of imported surplus ammo in the US were strictly curtailed. Nevertheless, Lake City continued to produce large volumes of .223 and 7.62 and those cartridges began showing up on many of the surplus ammo sites. TOM wrote me an email to tell me that he had finally managed to acquire a total of 5,400 rounds of the .308 NATO, plus the slugs he wanted and some other ammo that he had shipped to a *friend* and reshipped to the PRK. Some of it came from Medford, Oregon and some from Ammunition to Go. I gathered that it was exotic and emailed him to find out. His reply was to reread *The Ark*, concerning the ammo from Oregon and check out Ammunition to Go for their selection of exotic 12-gauge ammo.

He said, "Follow the world situation, it's going downhill fast."

TOM was on his flechettes kick again; buying them from Sabot Designs LLC. I couldn't tell which exotic 12-gauge ammo he bought because they had a wide selection. If I were to guess, I'd go with the buck & ball, the armor-piercing, the flash bang and perhaps the breaching rounds. He already had slugs and 00 buck. In one email, he explained his approach should a defensive situation arise; the Nazi .32 in the middle of his back, the Taurus PT1911 in a standard military holster on a pistol belt with 3 double magazine pouches, two canteens, one with a cup and the other with the stove.

He went on to say that he'd sling the Mossberg over his back and carry his rifle. His rifle ammo load out was 14 full magazines in his Tac-Force vest, 10 rounder in his rifle and the other 6 in his fanny pack and finally, 2 56-round bandoleers of assorted 12-gauge shells. Yeah right, TOM; how are you going to do that? Did you get a new battery for your wheelchair? Come to think of it, did you get your wheelchair fixed so you can lock the seat in place? Buying all the prohibited ammo must have really set him back, he had to pay to get it shipped to a certain southern state and then, reshipped to him. God Bless the PRK, nobody else will.

Every once in a while, the movie, *The Visual Bible: The Gospel of John* would be shown on the Trinity Broadcast Network. They also showed Mel Gibson's, *The Passion of The Christ*. For whatever reason, they chose not to show *The Last Temptation of Christ*. Writers claimed that *Paul Schrader's screenplay and Willem Dafoe's performance made perhaps the most honestly Christ like portrayal of Jesus ever filmed*. Can't tell you, didn't see the movie. The Gospel of John was good and so was The Passion of The Christ, although a little gory (realistic). TOM said he once saw The Black Hills Passion Play in South Dakota.

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The real problem should have been obvious to Bo' because it most certainly was to me. I knew he knew it, he read as much as I do, so let me show what we were thinking.

Item 1

The Dept. of Homeland Insecurity issued an updated National Incident Management Plan updating the 2004 plan.

Item 2

The gist of that story was, Russia and China issued stark warnings on Wednesday about the impact of the crisis on their recently booming economies in 2009, with Moscow saying the downturn could spark unrest in the streets.

Japan also approved a record-high budget aimed at avoiding the worst effects of the crisis and Germany prepared to pump billions of Euros into the economy in a new rescue plan in a holiday season marred by a slew of economic bad news.

Item 3

Russia has thrown down a new gauntlet to Barack Obama with an announcement that it will sharply increase production of strategic nuclear missiles.

In the latest of a series of combative moves by the Kremlin, a senior government official in Moscow said the Russian military would commission 70 strategic missiles over the next three years, as part of a massive rearmament program which will also include short-range missiles, 300 tanks, 14 warships and 50 planes.

Item 4

China's top military spokesman said it is seriously considering adding a first aircraft carrier to its navy fleet, a fresh indication of the country's growing military profile as it prepares for its first major naval deployment abroad.

At a rare news conference Tuesday, Chinese defense-ministry officials played down the importance of Beijing's decision to send warships to the Gulf of Aden to curb piracy – China's first such deployment in modern history – saying it doesn't represent a shift in defense policy. The two destroyers and supply ship are to depart Friday for the Middle East.

And all of this came on Christmas Eve, 2008, before Obama took office. It left some of us wondering, with our problems at home, how these news events fell into the overall scheme of things.

I can't speak for Bob, but I was, in fact, locked and loaded and buying what additional ammo I could afford (which wasn't much). I once had a chance to buy 5 partial cases of the SA .308 at \$187 per case of 7 battle packs plus shipping. One of my biggest mistakes in recent memory was only buying 2 instead of 5. I partially remedied that by buying 6 more battle packs but was still short at least 2,000-rounds.

Plus, the PRK has passed the law on ID numbers on cartridge cases. I worked my magic and used my scarecrow (another name for straw man) to remedy my problem with 12-gauge ammo and only needed a small amount of .32ACP and a couple of thousand more rounds of South African, preferably 19 battle packs (2,660 rounds), which I eventually found for \$60 per battle pack, expensive at twice the price.

Bob and Amanda were set; the Lodge now boasted a large bomb shelter with room for all of the employees and their families. They'd have a problem when they left the shelter for the Lodge, but for every problem, there was a solution. Some of those were discussed in Part I of this story. He said they added a coal fueled furnace since they were

maintaining ~2.4 million tons of coal for the Station. Plus they were slowly building their supply of LTS food.

While Obama and our country was trying to get all of our troops home, restore the economy, create an additional 2.5 million jobs and rob from the rich to give to the poor (after the government took its cut), our enemies were expanding their militaries. They were expanding their navies, air forces, missile programs and doing their best to catch up to our level of technology. That's why the Raptor program was so important; it was in all probability the most advanced air superiority fighter in the world. The F-22s would replace the F-15s and the F-35s would replace the F-16s and AV-8s. In addition to the F-35C, the Navy would maintain a large force of Super Hornets as the Air Force would maintain the Strike Eagles to the end of their useful lives.

We also needed the new tanker fleet and in the end, Boeing won out with their KC-767; mainly because it could be delivered earlier than the EADS/Lockheed tanker. In addition, Congress funded a large number of the C-17 Globemaster IIIs and even a few additional C-130s. These military purchases had a double purpose, improve the military and improve the economy.

Bob and I kept in touch on a continual basis and one of my oldest friends Bob Wahlstrom (see *On the Cheap*) and I were back in communication. I was surprised to learn that Bob had a SKS and some ammo. While not officially a prepper, he told me that they kept their shelves well stocked. They even had some land in Wisconsin with a trailer and solar panels. They were totally off the grid.

Bob said he carried a M14 while he was in the Iowa National Guard. He had worked for Collins Radio, later Rockwell, for 34 years and ended up with an outstanding retirement package. Unlike yours truly, he remained in excellent physical condition and still went spelunking.

The Lodge – Chapter 9

WASHINGTON – The terrorism threat to the United States over the next five years will be driven by instability in the Middle East and Africa, persistent challenges to border security and increasing Internet savvy, says a new intelligence assessment obtained by The Associated Press.

Chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear attacks are considered the most dangerous threats that could be carried out against the US. But those threats are also the most unlikely because it is so difficult for al-Qaida and similar groups to acquire the materials needed to carry out such plots, according to the internal Homeland Security Threat Assessment for the years 2008-2013.

The al-Qaeda terrorist network continues to focus on US attack targets vulnerable to massive economic losses, casualties and political “turmoil,” the assessment said.

Earlier this month, Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff said the threat posed by weapons of mass destruction remains “the highest priority at the federal level.” Speaking to reporters on Dec. 3, Chertoff explained that more people, such as terrorists, will learn how to make dirty bombs, biological and chemical weapons. “The other side is going to continue to learn more about doing things,” he said. Marked “for official use only,” the report does not specify its audience, but the assessments typically go to law enforcement, intelligence officials and the private sector. When determining threats, intelligence officials consider loss of life, economic and psychological consequences.

Intelligence officials also predict that in the next five years, terrorists will try to conduct a destructive biological attack. Officials are concerned about the possibility of infections to thousands of US citizens, overwhelming regional health care systems.

There could also be dire economic impacts caused by workers’ illnesses and deaths. Officials are most concerned about biological agents stolen from labs or other storage facilities, such as anthrax.

“The threat of terrorism and the threat of extremist ideologies has not abated,” Chertoff said in his year-end address on Dec. 18. “This threat has not evaporated, and we can’t turn the page on it.”

These high-consequence threats are not the only kind of challenges that will confront the US over the next five years.

Terrorists will continue to try to evade US border security measures and place operatives inside the mainland to carry out attacks, the 38-page assessment said. It also said that they may pose as refugees or asylum seekers or try to exploit foreign travel channels such as the visa waiver program, which allows citizens of 34 countries to enter the US without visas.

Long waits for immigration and more restrictive European refugee and asylum programs will cause more foreigners to try to enter the US illegally. Increasing numbers of Iraqis are expected to migrate to the US in the next five years; and refugees from Somalia and Sudan could increase because of conflicts in those countries, the assessment said.

Because there is a proposed cap of 12,000 refugees from Africa, officials expect more will try to enter the US illegally as well. Officials predict the same scenario for refugees from Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

Intelligence officials predict the pool of radical Islamists within the US will increase over the next five years due partly to the ease of online recruiting means. Officials foresee “a wave of young, self-identified Muslim ‘terrorist wannabes’ who aspire to carry out violent acts.”

The US has already seen some examples of these homegrown terrorists. Recently five Muslim immigrants were convicted of plotting to massacre US soldiers at Fort Dix in a case the government said demonstrated its post-Sept. 11 determination to stop terrorist attacks in the planning stages.

The Lebanese Shi’ite group Hezbollah does not have a known history of fomenting attacks inside the US, but that could change if there is some kind of “triggering” event, the Homeland assessment cautions.

A 2008 Interagency Intelligence Committee on Terrorism assessment said that Hezbollah members based in the US do local fundraising through charity projects and criminal activity, like money laundering, smuggling, drug trafficking, fraud and extortion, according to the homeland security assessment.

In addition, the cyber terror threat is expected to increase over the next five years, as hacking tools become more sophisticated and available. “Youthful, Internet-savvy extremists might apply their online acumen to conduct cyber-attacks rather than offer themselves up as operatives to conduct physical attacks,” according to the assessment.

Currently, Islamic terrorists, including al-Qaeda, would like to conduct cyber-attacks, but they lack the capability to do so, the assessment said. The large-scale attacks that are on al-Qaeda's wish list – such as disrupting a major city's water or power systems – require sophisticated cyber capabilities that the terrorist group does not possess. But al-Qaeda has the capability to hire sophisticated hackers to carry out these kinds of attacks, the assessment said. And federal officials believe that in the next three to five years, al-Qaeda could direct or inspire cyber-attacks that target the US economy.

Counterterrorism expert Frank Cilluffo says the typical cyber-attack would not achieve al-Qaeda's main goal of inflicting mass devastation with its resulting widespread media coverage. However, al-Qaida is likely to continue to rely on the Internet to spread its message, said Cilluffo, who runs the Homeland Security Policy Institute at George Washington University.

Officials also predict that domestic terrorists in the forms of radical animal rights and environmental extremists will become more adept with explosives and increase their use of arson attacks.

Digital networks are the nervous system of our modern technological civilization, essential to commerce and culture. The entire global economy, from banking to utilities to manufacturing to healthcare, relies on Internet-style communications. Even the US military has reorganized for what it calls “network-centric warfare.”

But the Internet empowers everybody, including criminals and foreign governments intent on weakening the United States of America. As digital networks have proliferated, so has malicious software designed to exploit the networks for destructive purposes. Internet predators are increasingly capable and sophisticated.

Cyber threats are now so common that they pose a real danger to US national security. Networks must be secured against intrusion; otherwise the United States risks severe economic damage and potential defeat at the hands of other countries. But the anonymity of the Internet impedes efforts to deter and destroy threats.

The US government has taken a number of steps aimed at combating threats to digital networks, including a Comprehensive National Cybersecurity Initiative launched in 2008. However, the current federal framework for dealing with cyber threats is fragmented, and it cannot keep up with emerging dangers.

The new Obama administration will have to determine whether current cybersecurity efforts are sufficient or if additional resources are required. The Obama administration will also have to decide whether the current federal framework for addressing cyber threats can do the job, and if not how to tap more agile sources of expertise in the marketplace.

In the 20 plus years since the Cold War ended, the world has become connected in ways it never was before. A breakthrough called the Internet has integrated previously isolated networks into a single global web that anyone with a computer can enter. The technology that made this possible, called Internet Protocol Communications, has torn down the barriers that once impeded interaction among diverse and scattered users.

As a result, the world has become a more open and productive place. People who once had little say in how their society operated have been empowered, and opportunities for enrichment of every kind have multiplied.

But the paradox of the Internet is that in delivering power to the edges, it has also delivered power to the fringes. Predators of every persuasion now have access and options they never would have enjoyed in the past.

Some are agents of foreign governments seeking to subvert democracy or steal its secrets. Others are criminals, cult members, transnational terrorists or nihilistic vandals. All have discovered that the Internet provides a potential pathway to their goals. And increasingly, it is information networks themselves – the nervous system of our civilization – that such actors seek to target.

America's Defense Meltdown is the title of a new book on military reform, edited by Winslow Wheeler and published by the Center for Defense Information. In it, some of the leading figures from the US military reform movement of the 1970s and 1980s update their work and relate it to today's challenges, including those posed by Fourth Generation war.

The book is timely. For years, Chuck Spinney and I have said there will be no reform until the money simply isn't there anymore. If that day has not yet arrived, it is on the calendar. The combination of a severe recession or depression and vast New Deal-type public works programs in the US national economy means something has to give. As the largest element in the discretionary US annual federal budget, defense spending is an obvious target. More, it is a worthy target, in that much of what we spend buys little or no capability. The problem is not only mismanagement but also outdated and fundamentally wrongheaded approaches to war.

The latter are the focus of *America's Defense Meltdown*, although the book addresses financial and managerial issues. Here I want to focus on three chapters, the three most innovative – I leave my own two chapters, on the US Marine Corps and the US Navy, for others to weigh. The first is Chet Richards' *Shattering Illusions: A National Security Strategy for 2009-2017*.

In its first incarnation in the 1970s and 1980s, the military reform movement deliberately avoided the subject of strategy. It did so because the Cold War locked the United States into worshipping the great clay god of the Brussels-based North Atlantic Treaty Organization, which is to say into a continental strategy. Then, as now, a maritime strategy made better sense, but anyone who questioned the holiness of NATO was cast into outer darkness. So we bit our tongues and bided our time.

Now, with the Cold War over and the challenge of Fourth Generation war upon the United States, a debate over strategy is urgent. Richards launches it con brio, arguing that the US government must determine what state militaries can and cannot do in a Fourth Generation world.

Then, the American people and their political leaders must stop asking our armed services to do things that are impossible for them, like turning fly-blown, flea-bitten Third World hellholes into Switzerland. More, the US government should stop buying forces that are useless or worse for the types of conflicts the United States is likely to face. Richards may disagree, but I think that in his chapter he moves closer to what I have advocated for years, namely a defensive rather than an offensive grand strategy. In any event, he puts the subject of strategy on the table, which is vitally important. Because a

higher level of war dominates a lower, if you don't get your strategy right, no matter what you do at the tactical and operational levels, you lose.

The brilliant second chapter of the book by Pierre Sprey and Bob Dilger is entitled *Reversing the Decay of American Air Power*. In it, the authors chop up the idea of *winning through air power*, aka strategic bombing, and they flush that concept down war's sewage system.

More, Sprey and Dilger explain in detail how the United States can build an air force that can really make a difference in wars' outcomes and how the US government can do so for less money than it is spending now. The key idea is simple and well supported by military history: build an air force that works in close union with ground forces. A personal anecdote: Years ago I was asked by a thoughtful US Air Forces Strategic Air Command commander (yes, there was one), "What am I supposed to do with 18 B-2 bombers?" I replied, "Tow them around to county fairs and charge admission."

My favorite chapter in *America's Defense Meltdown* is Bruce Gudmundsson's, *The Army National Guard, the Army Reserve, and the Marine Corps Reserve*. Gudmundsson is the highly talented author of *Stormtroop Tactics*, the history of the development of Third Generation war in the German army in World War I. Here, he shows how to take the classic European military reserve system and adapt it to American conditions.

Few transplants work "straight," as direct imports. Adapting them requires great insight and imagination, and Gudmundsson demonstrates both in proposals that would improve the usefulness of the US National Guard and armed forces Reserve forces by orders of magnitude. His chapter alone is easily worth the price of the whole book.

Is anyone listening? Maybe. Interest is growing on Capitol Hill in reviving the Military Reform Caucus. Both Republicans and Democrats in the US Congress see that further cuts in the national defense budget are coming, and they know that left to its own devices the US Department of Defense will cut its own combat forces while preserving the Pentagon's bureaucracy and the money flow to its major industrial and high-tech contractors.

I suggested to a Capitol Hill staffer earlier this month that the motto of a revived Reform Caucus should be, *Preserve the combat units, cut the bureaucracy*. That slogan could quickly gain bipartisan support in the US Congress.

America's Defense Meltdown is available in print from the Center for Defense Information (\$25 for the book) and is also available on the CDI's Web site. Interestingly, the site is blocked on US Department of Defense computers. Why? To quote the late William S. Buckley, the founder and publisher of National Review magazine, why does baloney reject the grinder?

The Lodge – Chapter 10

I had more connections than TOM did, mostly developed through my CERT activities and a general willingness to join more forums. Consequently, I ended sending him more warnings than the reverse. The immediately foregoing were just samples of some I sent him one day back before the inauguration. After that we were out of touch for several months and when the grid and internet were back up, I sent him my notes for the story and he wrote Part 1 for me.

Later, when the unrest in the country and around the globe got worse, we began considering the military buildup with China, India and Russia. Russia had some failures with their new SLBM missile based on the Topol-M, the Bulava. That missile, the SS-N-30, was specifically developed for the Project 935, Borei, as a direct replacement for the SS-N-28. The timeframe for deployment ran the timeframe into the second decade.

You can read the news and find out more if you're interested. However, Barack's plate just got fuller. I began to count his crises and ran out of fingers on my left hand. About the only really good news was the price of gas, the priced dropped from \$4+ to less than a dollar and a half and Diesel came down too.

We had our own alert system that was adapted from the THEATCON System.

The THREATCON scale is intended to achieve inter-service coordination and support for defense activities within the United States, on US bases abroad, and aboard US vessels. The military's four threat levels, ALPHA, BRAVO, CHARLIE and DELTA, each bear a set of increasingly restrictive security precautions. When no threat level is indicated, the threat level is considered Normal. Threat-level considerations include the movement of people, visitor identification, vehicle checks, and the offset of allowed parking next to facilities and buildings. Following the terrorist attack of September 11th, while NASA prepares for the launch of space shuttle Endeavour, the Kennedy Space Center states that their current level of alert is THREATCON CHARLIE.

THREATCON NORMAL: This condition of normal readiness exists when there is no known threat requiring a heightened state of alert.

THREATCON ALPHA: This condition applies when there is a general threat of possible terrorist activity against personnel and facilities, the nature and extent of which are unpredictable, and circumstances do not justify full implementation of THREATCON BRAVO measures. However, it may be necessary to implement certain measures from higher THREATCONS resulting from intelligence received or as a deterrent. The measures in this THREATCON must be capable of being maintained indefinitely.

THREATCON BRAVO: This condition applies when an increased and more predictable threat of terrorist activity exists. The measures in this THREATCON must be capable of being maintained for weeks without causing undue hardship, affecting operational capability, and aggravating relations with local authorities.

THREATCON CHARLIE: This condition applies when an incident occurs or intelligence is received indicating some form of terrorist action against personnel and facilities is imminent. Implementation of measures in this THREATCON for more than a short period probably will create hardship and affect the peacetime activities of the unit and its personnel.

THREATCON DELTA: This condition applies in the immediate area where a terrorist attack has occurred or when intelligence has been received that terrorist action against a specific location or person is likely. Normally, this THREATCON is declared as a localized condition.

When ELF attacked, Montrose Station was at THREATCON ALPHA because there was a general threat of possible terrorist activity against our personnel and facilities. Immediately thereafter, we were operating at THREATCON DELTA. However, with the passage of time and no further attacks, I notched it down about one level per week until we were once again at ALPHA. There was no way I'd even consider NORMAL.

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We thought we had the company's Internet Connections very secure. We had an extremely heavy duty Firewall, in fact several. Our router had an industrial firewall built in. Behind that we had a software firewall as a last best chance to prevent an intrusion. Behind that, every computer had Symantec's Norton 360 2.0, their top of the line product. However, some hacker got through the router's firewall and was blocked by the software firewall. Our people immediately upgraded the router firewall and checked all of the computers to make sure everyone's Norton was up to date.

We were well down the road into the new presidency and the GOP was busy searching for candidates who might be able to defeat Obama. I can tell you, there would be no *Palin in 2012* campaign; she had replaced Ted Stevens. Maybe 2016; if we still have a country. Now, why would I say or think something like that? I can explain, really...I listen to the news and read newspapers. It wasn't a question of if, only when and what. That's what my friend TOM claims and more and more, people are starting to believe him.

The key to understanding the events that followed was understanding Homeland Security's (FEMAs) December 08 warning and the statement issued on Christmas Day of the same year. I outlined them above for your benefit. As I've said, I kept both the Sheriff and the Chief of Police in Clinton updated as I received notifications from my network of sources. On most occasions, the first they heard about something was when I shared it with them.

The Lodge – Chapter 11

DHI said that sometime during the next five years, they expected an attack against the country, coming from internal sources. The next thing I read was that the WMD they expected to be used was a bioweapon. I requested MSA Millennium CBRN masks with extra filters. Strangely, the mask was only rated 4 on a scale of 1 to 5, with 5 being the worst. Even the 3M mil spec M-40 only rated a 4. Some other brands were rated 1 and were fairly complete kits. The company in an unbelievable moment of generosity even bought masks for each member of our family. I don't know, but believe that their motive was eliminating fear for the families among the security force. That same expenditure, coming as a line item in the Station modernization, also added additional supplies to the Lodge's shelter.

They still had one purchase to make and it was totally unannounced. Some Whiz Kid took a look at the weapons we had for use in protecting the Station. He or she decided that the Bushmaster M-4s were a poor choice. They seemed to work fine when the Station was attacked, but he or she must have been the (grand) son or (grand) daughter of one of McNamara's Whiz Kids who eliminated the M14 rifle. We didn't end up with M1As; we ended up with H&K 416s and 417s. The Bushmaster's were retained, I suppose, in case a family member lacked a firearm. The rifles each came with 2 barrels, the 16" and the 20", plus a very large supply of magazines.

The ammo that was purchased was mil spec Winchester ammo: 7.62 – 147gr copper clad steel jacket bullet – lead core; and, 62gr USA Full Metal Jacket. Someone must have thought we would be invaded by the Russian Army; we had more ammo than we could shoot anytime soon. Did you ever notice that companies tend to overreact? They either: completely ignore your requests, get you something other than what you requested or spend money like they have a printing press in someone's basement.

So you're assuming that each member of the staff had to choose between a 416 or a 417? Oh hell no, they bought every last employee one of each. One can't say we were not well armed, P-14s, 590A1s, H&K 416s & 417s plus the Bushmaster M-4s and High Capacity Springfield Armory pistols for backup. I took my allocated weapons to arm my family; there was nothing wrong with my M1911A1, Winchester Defender or my M14. They were, well, comfortable.

I suppose I should explain one other thing. Although the company was only licensed for two FCC channels, those radios had 16 channels (portable) or 32 channels (mobile/base). Do you have any idea how many people around the country use unlicensed business radios? A whole lot of the racecar drivers on local circuits. They don't use the radios often enough to attract attention. The radio suppliers assign frequencies when the radios are purchased so the driver's frequencies don't overlap.

TOM talked about the F-22. I checked around and found an old story. "Sometime during his first couple of months in office, President-elect Barack Obama will have to confront

one of his first big decisions about US defense policy and budgets. And it's a thorny one.

“Specifically, Obama and his as-yet-unnamed circle of top defense advisers will have to determine whether to continue spending roughly \$4 billion a year to buy F-22 Raptor fighter jets built by Lockheed Martin.

“They might decide, as the Bush administration has, that the F-22 is superfluous and that the money is needed for other priorities. On the other hand, the Air Force, according to defense analysts and consultants, wants to buy at least 60 more of the \$180 million jets.

“Jim McAleese, a consultant with close ties to the Air Force, told a Reuters conference in Washington last week that the service was putting *all its political capital* into buying more F-22s beyond the 183 on order.

“I think the Air Force will work very hard to build a consensus” around the idea of buying 60 more F-22s under a three-year agreement, McAleese said.

“Time is of the essence, according to the Air Force and Lockheed, which says it needs hundreds of millions of dollars soon to keep the F-22 production line up and running. If the line begins to shut down and then is restarted, F-22 advocates say it would add hundreds of millions of dollars to the cost of buying more planes.

The F-22, launched in the early 1980s to counter Soviet air forces in Europe, has been targeted by the Pentagon civilian management team as an airplane that is likely to be of little use in the kinds of irregular wars the US is fighting or is likely to face.

“The Air Force and its backers say the F-22 could be necessary to deal with regional threats posed by countries buying advanced Russian and Chinese fighter jets. Lockheed Chief Executive Robert Stevens told the same conference that the F-22's stealth capabilities make it an excellent deterrent.

“And F-22 supporters are trotting out the jobs argument, saying the Obama administration surely will not want to put thousands more aerospace industry employees out of work in the midst of a deep recession.

“Loren Thompson, a defense analyst with the Lexington Institute think tank and a consultant to Lockheed with close ties to the Air Force, said in a recent op-ed piece that while defense purchases shouldn't be justified by the jobs they create, killing the F-22 could potentially affect thousands of jobs, directly and indirectly.

“Maintaining F-22 production, Thompson said, is important ‘because the US still has a big commercial aerospace sector benefiting from the economies of scale created by suppliers and labor forces serving both public and private markets.’

About 1,800 employees work on the F-22 at Lockheed's Fort Worth plant, where the aircraft's mid-fuselage section is produced. Boeing produces the wings in Seattle; Pratt & Whitney supplies the engines; and Lockheed assembles the planes in Marietta, Ga.

“We await and will support the decision of the next administration regarding any continuation of F-22 production,” Lockheed spokesman Rob Fuller said in a statement. Defense Secretary Robert Gates has been in open conflict with the Air Force over the F-22 and fired the former Air Force secretary and chief of staff for, among other things, their open advocacy of the program in defiance of administration policy.

“Obama is retaining Gates, but F-22 supporters believe that they have a better chance of preserving the program once Deputy Defense Secretary Gordon England leaves. England, the former head of General Dynamics and Lockheed's Fort Worth plant, has said repeatedly that the Air Force does not need more F-22s and has worked to accelerate purchases of the F-35 joint strike fighter.

In a recent interview with the Star-Telegram, England said the Pentagon's limited funds for aircraft need to be spent on speeding F-35 development and production.

“There's no question that Gordon England has tried to kill the F-22,” Thompson said in an interview.

“England's view is supported by a number of recent position papers from think tanks offering advice to Obama, and The New York Times editorial page has weighed in against the Raptor.

“Obama is a smart politician and,” Thompson said, “will probably pick other defense battles to fight that will produce greater budgetary savings than shutting down F-22 production.”

“Plus, senior Democrats on the House Armed Services Committee are supporters of the program. ‘Why would Obama want to get into an argument with these people?’” Thompson said.

Other than retaining Gates, Obama has not named anyone to fill key Defense Department posts, most notably England's successor. Obama has been advised on defense policy by officials from the Clinton administration, including former Air Force Secretary F. Whitten Peters, who some say may be an F-22 advocate. “

Smart or not, some of those parts must have been made in Illinois, Obama kept the F-22 project. The original plan was for 648 aircraft, reduced to 442 to 339 to 229 to, eventually, 183. Well, $183 + 4 + 60$ is 247, a step in the right direction. According to Air Force officials, a minimum of 381 F-22A aircraft are needed to satisfy today's national security requirements, yet OSD stated it can only afford to buy 187 F-22A aircraft. This results in a 194-aircraft gap in capability. Additionally, the Air Force stated a “need” for greater

ground attack and intelligence-gathering capabilities, not included in the existing business case that will require an extensive modernization program.

TOM was in the Air Force and is big on the F-22. I think that if it were up to him, we'd have 750, not counting 2 seat trainers. I had to chuckle when he told me about getting the PT1911. He bought it but couldn't get it delivered. When it was actually delivered Christmas of 2008, it was missing the slide stop plus two of the five magazines he was supposed to get. The PT1911 comes with 2 8-round magazines with bumper stops. He told the buyer he wanted 3 EXTRA magazines, but the buyer only got 3 magazines, period.

He never said he was angry. I've known him for a while and I can tell you from his choice of words in that email where he told me what happened; my California buddy was NOT a happy camper. He first wrote, "I got 95% of the pistol. Stacy required Derek to dismantle it and he forgot the pin that holds the gun together. It's in the mail and he and she are on my list. Furthermore, I told him 3 extra magazines, not 3 magazines. Nice looking handgun. Kind of hard to assemble, when you've never disassembled it."

That was followed up with this: "However, I took my time and have assembled it to the point where I'm ready to insert the pin (slide stop). I could only get 7 rounds in the magazines because the springs are too stiff. Damon added the 8th round."

Getting this firearm has been a pain in the butt. First, he spent some of the money because his checking account was over drawn. Next, he bought the pistol and screwed up the number of magazines. Then UPS returned it.

I've waited this long and should have it together in just a few days. Nice gun, I'm glad you and Gina recommended it. Now I can round out my armory with a .22 rifle and a M82A1M, LOL. Fulton Armory has the NM flashhider with bayonet lug. BUT they won't ship them to PRK and it takes a few tools to swap out the muzzle brake for the flashhider (pliers, alignment rod). Besides, the bayonet for the M14 is way too short. Don't suppose you know where I could get a 16" bayonet that would fit on a M1A, do you?"

I told him I'd look, but didn't he already write a story about that? He wrote back, *THREATCON DELTA*. I think he probably had to check his stories working backwards until he found it; however, back to our present situation.

Once Obama came up with new EO and we achieved a 2.4 million ton supply of coal, our procurement was reduced to the amount we burned, 6,500 tons per day.

I picked up a warning that DHI had a strong tip that several nuclear weapons, either dirty bombs or real nukes, it wasn't clear, would be detonated in several major population centers around the country. First off, I called Kent and Kevin to get them up to speed, next, I raised our THREATCON to BRAVO and finally, I notified the Station Manager.

“Nobody is going to set off a nuke in Henry County, are they?”

“I seriously doubt it. That’s not to say that they might not set off one in Kansas City. We’d still be ok unless the wind was in the wrong direction.”

“You went to BRAVO?”

“BRAVO condition applies when an increased and more predictable threat of terrorist activity exists. The measures in this THREATCON must be capable of being maintained for weeks without causing undue hardship, affecting operational capability, and aggravating relations with local authorities. I’ve already notified Kent and Kevin that we’re at BRAVO and I assume one or the other will notify the MHP barracks. If we have to go to CHARLIE, I like permission to bring the families out to the Lodge.”

“Why?”

“CHARLIE condition applies when an incident occurs or intelligence is received indicating some form of terrorist action against personnel and facilities is imminent. Implementation of measures in this THREATCON for more than a short period probably will create hardship and affect the peacetime activities of the unit and its personnel. Having their families here and protected should overcome any concerns in that department.”

“What would make you go to CHARLIE or DELTA?”

“Any kind of nuclear device in Kansas City would get us to CHARLIE and if we picked up even a trace of radiation, I move to DELTA and stay there until the emergency was over.”

“Anything else?”

“Yeah, WW III would get us to DELTA in a heartbeat.”

“You don’t really believe we’ll have WW III, do you?”

“To quote Bill Dana, *Gee, I hope not!*”

“Who?”

“Jose Jiménez.”

“I don’t know the name.”

The Lodge – Chapter 12

“Look it up on Wiki, he was a comedian during the 60s.”

◦

On an Ed Sullivan Show appearance, he related a story of how a woman recognized him on the street, but only knew him as José Jiménez, and asked what his real name was. Instead of his stage name, “Bill Dana,” he gave her his real name, “William Szathmary.” And she said, “Wow, no wonder you changed it to Jiménez!” When Sullivan asked him, “Is that your crash helmet?” He replied, “Oh, I hope not!”

◦

I’m no spring chicken and only a few years younger than TOM. I don’t have the time, or the skill, to write stories as he does. I am a fairly good security chief because of my wide connections. While we now had few troops overseas, I was also concerned that more and more units were being assigned to *Domestic Security*. As is typical for the military, their ROEs allowed them only *to fire if fired upon*. Did Obama really need 11,000 soldiers at his inauguration?

I’m now certain that had the public at large known about the EO shutting down coal fired plants, 11,000 wouldn’t have been enough. It did end well and we only experienced the single attack from the ELF. To counter something I’ve read at Frugal’s, *I’ve read the book and still don’t know how it end’s*. Near as I can tell, that Russian seems to think Missouri will be in that yellow patch on the map the WSJ printed. Someone asked the appropriate question, *How are we going to get everyone to where they belong?*

One other thing I forgot to tell you. Gary and Sharon picked up a good used Onan Residential Standby 30kw generator with a 200amp ATS. He told me it used propane and he was shopping for a used tank, 5,000-gallons (52 days full power) and up. Maximum fuel usage was around 4gph. However, they still didn’t have a shelter.

Speaking of which, KCPL added a pair of commercial sized front loading washers and commercial dryers to the Lodge and moved the old washer and dryer to the shelter. The shelter, being about only 3,000ft² would be cramped if we had to use it, especially considering the amount of food stored in the shelter. I’m not saying we couldn’t do it, but I surmised that many things would end up being done in shifts. As far as post shelter housing, we’d probably put the single people up in the plant cafeteria and had folding cots stored.

The cafeteria had propane fueled or electrical powered equipment. KCPL bought a second used rental unit for the cafeteria, a 20kw unit that burned propane and added a second 1,100 gallon tank for the generator. We had maintained the filling schedule for the propane tanks for the Lodge and Station so the tanks were full most of the time. KCPL balked at buying a rototiller, not that it mattered. Several employees agreed to

store their rototillers at the Lodge. At this time, both the Lodge and the plant each had 2 1,100 gallon tanks filled to 1,000 gallons each, topped off weekly.

As nice a weapon as the HK-417 was, it just didn't feel right to me. Since it had the same capacity as my M14, I had nothing to gain by switching. In fact, none of the weapons the company bought had much over what I brought from Utah. About the only things I gained were more ammo and more time to practice. Most of the guys went with the .308 NATO because of the extra range it afforded. We'd been extremely lucky the first time out with ELF and didn't want to tempt fate.

Typically, back before Obama was sworn in, most of the security force worked the day shift. That changed when the coal plants were shut down and I reorganized the security force into 3 units of the same size. Everything has a downside. In this case I eventually realized that I was working anywhere from 16 to 18 hours a day, 7 days a week. Amanda was angry because she rarely saw me and I was beyond exhaustion. I designated my second in command to take over my duties for a few days so I could get some rest. I kept a CP-200 handy, just in case.

"Bob, this is Chuck, come back."

"What's up, Chuck?"

"We have the damned Army here on our doorstep, trying to get in. I told them no. but they're rather insistent. I got them to hold off until I could call you."

"Where's the Station Manager?"

"He's off."

"Who is the highest ranking employee there?"

"I think that would be me."

"You tell them to cool their heels until I get there. Meanwhile, call Kent and Kevin and have them notify the MHP for backup."

"I'll try."

"Don't try, do!"

"10-4."

I got around, strapped on my equipment, grabbed my pistol, shotgun and M14 and headed to the Station. Amanda and I and the members of her family were staying at the Lodge as was most of the staff. The only one's not staying at the Lodge, were staying in the cafeteria. Apparently while I was rushing around to head to the Station, Chuck

called up the other two shifts. The Army only sent one Platoon and we were outnumbered about 2 to 1. That said, when all was considered, we were probably the superior force.

The first reason we were superior was our small arms. The second reason we were superior was the various ordnance we had available to us that they lacked. The third and most important reason was our defensive position. We weren't the Vietnamese and we'd prefer to fight from a distance rather than by grabbing them by the belts. I watched *We Were Soldiers* and wondered to myself if the movie were accurate. It was, but those troops had only been issued the M16 rifles 10 days before the battle.

The unit was a Platoon led by a butter bar Lieutenant. I sort of figured he was still wet behind the ears. If this kid was full of himself, there was no telling how he'd react to my refusing them entry. Because it would take the law 10-15 minutes to get to the Station, I hadn't really hurried.

"Something I can do for you Lieutenant?"

"We're here take over the power plant."

"It's a Power Station with 3 175mw plants."

"Whatever, stand aside."

"Not on my watch, no sir!"

"That's what he said."

"That's what who said?"

"The CEO of Great Plains Energy."

"What does that have to do with anything?"

"Well, you must not watch the news. Congress signed off on Kyoto Accords and Obama signed off right after he issued the new Executive Order. We were tasked with notifying various power company officials and when we notified your CEO, he went on TV and announced that Great Plains would not shut down any power plants. He died mysteriously a short while later. The UN has charged the US with a *violation of the Kyoto Accords and crimes against humanity*. So we're here to take over this power plant/Station."

"Bullshit. You aren't taking over Montrose Station!"

"Who is going to stop me?"

“We will until the Sheriff, Chief of Police and the Missouri Highway Patrol show up. All you have are those sissy guns, the poodle shooters; by contrast, we all have main battle rifles. Those don’t look like M2HBs on your Hummers.”

“They’re not; they happen to be the upgraded to the M2HB, the M2E2. They have a Quick Change Barrel (QCB), a rail accessory mount, an improved flash hider and a manual safety.”

“We don’t have any of those, Lieutenant. Can we have yours?”

“Over my dead body...”

I seriously doubt he even saw my hand move to my holster and pull out my M1911A1. I shared one bullet with him...right between the eyes. Well, he obviously wasn’t going to listen and you cut off the head to kill a snake. My guys went for the NCOs who could be more dangerous than the butter bar. We didn’t walk away clean this time, 1 dead, 2 critically wounded, 5 seriously wounded and a few more with lesser injuries. The only soldiers who walked away were those who threw down their arms when it became obvious they were going to lose. It wouldn’t be the first time American soldiers surrendered.

“Listen up, troops. Drop your packs and LBE plus any other weapons you have and start hoofing it back to wherever you came from. Any questions? Good!”

These guys weren’t Missouri National Guard, they were regular Army. I doubt Marines would have let us get the drop on them. This Platoon consisted of 4 squads. A squad consists of three fire teams, each of which is built around an automatic weapon and controlled by a fire team leader. The squad is composed of 13 men: a sergeant (squad leader) and three fire teams of four men each. Each fire team normally consists of a corporal (fire team leader/grenadier), two lance corporals (automatic rifleman and assistant automatic rifleman), and a private or private first class (rifleman). Apparently the weapons squad was responsible for the M2E2s, we didn’t ask.

The MHP and Sheriff showed up shortly after the soldiers began walking down the road. They called for ambulances for the wounded soldiers because their companions had abandoned them.

“What’s the story this time?”

“That butter bar said his little Platoon was taking over the plant. He implied, indirectly, that they’d taken out the CEO of Great Plains Energy. Anyway, I asked him to give us his machineguns and he made me an offer I couldn’t refuse.”

“Acting strictly as the head of Station security?”

“Absolutely. Unless you object, I think we’ll hang onto the Hummers for the Army.”

“Do you want the Hummers or just the machineguns?”

“Wantta split? We’ll take the machineguns and ammo and you can take the Hummers and the individual weapons.”

“Well...you’ll take care of notifying the BATFE?”

“Sure, first thing on the second Tuesday of next week.”

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Between you and me, I think that Kent was distracted by the thought of having to report the incident to the Army. What, in the name of God, was wrong with this country? William S. Lind had an answer:

Over the last forty years, America has been conquered by the same force that earlier took over Russia, China, Germany and Italy. That force is ideology. Here, as elsewhere, ideology has inflicted enormous damage on the traditional culture it came to dominate, fracturing it everywhere and sweeping much of it away. In its place came fear, and ruin. Russia will take a generation or more to recover from Communism, if it ever can.

The ideology that has taken over America goes most commonly by the name of *Political Correctness*. Some people see it as a joke. It is not. It is deadly serious. It seeks to alter virtually all the rules, formal and informal, that govern relations among people and institutions. It wants to change behavior, thought, even the words we use. To a significant extent, it already has. Whoever or whatever controls language also controls thought. Who dares to speak of *ladies* now?

Just what is *Political Correctness*? Political Correctness is in fact cultural Marxism – Marxism translated from economic into cultural terms. The effort to translate Marxism from economics into culture did not begin with the student rebellion of the 1960s. It goes back at least to the 1920s and the writings of the Italian Communist Antonio Gramsci. In 1923, in Germany, a group of Marxists founded an institute devoted to making the transition, the Institute of Social Research (later known as the Frankfurt School). One of its founders, George Lukacs, stated its purpose as answering the question, *Who shall save us from Western Civilization?* The Frankfurt School gained profound influence in American universities after many of its leading lights fled to the United States in the 1930s to escape National Socialism in Germany.

The Frankfurt School blended Marx with Freud, and later influences (some Fascist as well as Marxist) added linguistics to create *Critical Theory* and *deconstruction*. These in turn greatly influenced education theory, and through institutions of higher education gave birth to what we now call *Political Correctness*. The lineage is clear, and it is traceable right back to Karl Marx.

The Lodge – Chapter 13

Continues...

The parallels between the old, economic Marxism and cultural Marxism are evident. Cultural Marxism, or Political Correctness, shares with classical Marxism the vision of a *classless society*, i.e., a society not merely of equal opportunity, but equal condition. Since that vision contradicts human nature – because people are different, they end up unequal, regardless of the starting point – society will not accord with it unless forced. So, under both variants of Marxism, it is forced. This is the first major parallel between classical and cultural Marxism: both are totalitarian ideologies. The totalitarian nature of Political Correctness can be seen on campuses where *PC* has taken over the college: freedom of speech, of the press, and even of thought are all eliminated.

The second major parallel is that both classical, economic Marxism and cultural Marxism have single-factor explanations of history. Classical Marxism argues that all of history was determined by ownership of the means of production. Cultural Marxism says that history is wholly explained by which groups – defined by sex, race, and sexual normality or abnormality – have power over which other groups.

The third parallel is that both varieties of Marxism declare certain groups virtuous and others evil *a priori*, that is, without regard for the actual behavior of individuals. Classical Marxism defines workers and peasants as virtuous and the bourgeoisie (the middle class) and other owners of capital as evil. Cultural Marxism defines blacks, Hispanics, Feminist women, homosexuals and some additional minority groups as virtuous and white men as evil. (Cultural Marxism does not recognize the existence of non-Feminist women, and defines blacks who reject Political Correctness as whites).

The fourth parallel is in means: expropriation. Economic Marxists, where they obtained power, expropriated the property of the bourgeoisie and handed it to the state, as the *representative* of the workers and the peasants. Cultural Marxists, when they gain power (including through our own government), lay penalties on white men and others who disagree with them and give privileges to the groups they favor. Affirmative action is an example.

Finally, both varieties of Marxists employ a method of analysis designed to show the correctness of their ideology in every situation. For classical Marxists, the analysis is economic. For cultural Marxists, the analysis is linguistic: deconstruction. Deconstruction *proves* that any *text*, past or present, illustrates the oppression of blacks, women, homosexuals, etc. by reading that meaning into words of the text (regardless of their actual meaning). Both methods are, of course, phony analyses that twist the evidence to fit preordained conclusions, but they lend a *scientific* air to the ideology.

These parallels are neither remarkable nor coincidental. They exist because Political Correctness is directly derived from classical Marxism, and is in fact a variant of Marxism. Through most of the history of Marxism, cultural Marxists were “read out” of the

movement by classical, economic Marxists. Today, with economic Marxism dead, cultural Marxism has filled its shoes. The medium has changed, but the message is the same: a society of radical egalitarianism enforced by the power of the state.

Political Correctness now looms over American society like a colossus. It has taken over both political parties – recent Republican conventions were choreographed according to its dictates, while cultural conservatives were shown the door – and is enforced by many laws and government regulations. It controls the most powerful element in our culture, the entertainment industry. It dominates both public and higher education: many a college campus is a small, ivy-covered North Korea. It has even captured the higher clergy in many Christian churches. Anyone in the Establishment who departs from its dictates swiftly ceases to be a member of the Establishment.

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TOM is a real fan of William S. Lind. Mr. William S. Lind created the framework of the Four Generations of Modern War in the 1980s. I've heard TOM refer to 4th Generation war several times. It is basically what we experienced in Vietnam/Iraq/Afghanistan. It is just as easy to put the shoe on the other foot, if need be; two can play at that game, provided one paid attention to history. There's the quote TOM includes in every story, *Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.*

There are two kinds of guerillas, and they're spelled differently. One is the Gorilla, a big hulking primate that can tear you limb from limb and the second, spelled Guerilla, who is nothing if not sneaky. You can call them what you want, Charlie, Fedayeen, Taliban or in this case, American Citizens; the point is, they all have the same goals, overcoming an invader, overcoming a tyrannical government or, both.

Congress had the right idea with the coal phase out because they put a moratorium on building new plants that didn't meet standards and allowed a reasonable phase in. Even Obama's second EO was more reasonable, it gave the companies time to bring the old plants up to standard over a period of about 11 years. GPE and KCPL brought Montrose Station up to those standards; the 2020 standards. Then the Army shows up with only a Platoon and attempts to take over Montrose Station. That's ludicrous.

Although I'd schooled my staff in the concept that you don't shoot to wound, you shoot to kill, it was hard for my people to shoot other Americans. Our critically wounded were transported by chopper, the remainder by ambulance and the soldiers went last.

"This is going to cause trouble Bob."

"Don't I know it, Kent? Say, what's new, any more new wars break out?"

"There was that thing between India and Pakistan plus that thing between Iran and Israel, but you know about those. Nothing has happened recently, but I won't put much store in that, trouble could breakout at any moment."

“Why do you say that?”

“Russia still refuses to supply gas to the Ukraine. India and Pakistan are still face to face on their common border. Both Russia and China have completed the first phase of their buildups and have moved to phase two. Plus we have that thing with the UN. I don't believe that will end well.”

“Did you ever read a patriot fiction story titled, *Battle of Jakes?*”

“Can't say that I did, what was that about?”

“The pertinent part was where an Air Force pilot bombed the UN building and brought it down.”

“Really? Tell me about it.”

“Well, as I recall, Captain Edge Davis was on a training mission to drop a 2000 LB Special Purpose Bomb and RTB. After he did a midflight refueling, he put out a phony MAYDAY and headed to New York. Again, as I recall, he set the aiming point at the 3rd floor center of the front of the building just above the entrance...at 750 feet and 400 knots Captain Edge Davis released the second shot heard round the world...pulling back hard on the stick into full afterburner...never would world politics be the same... hundreds of heads turned by now...watching the slow motion arc of a 2000 LB Special Purpose Bomb arching toward the United Nations Building, a Fireman bites his cigar in half, a veteran screams *incoming* and the world stopped...”

“What happened?”

“The building came down; the one ton device punched a nice clean little hole in the front of the building for only a fraction of a second...a sudden flash and a devastating explosion issued forth... the ground from around the building outward heaved and shook, the shock wave running along the ground in a wave that threw people to the ground stunned...water on the East River concussed and rose as vapor for a split second and from the sky Captain Edge Davis saw the shock wave pulse outwards...all he felt was a crumppp in the seat for his pants and then a shudder of the airframe....”

“And?”

“He flamed out and ejected over the mountains of New Hampshire, an instant hero.”

“Do you think something like that will happen now?”

“The only question in my mind is the target. It could be the UN or the White House, possibly both.”

“How?”

“Use an F-22 with 2 external tanks and fly nap of the earth out over the ocean. He could carry 2 1,000 pound JDAMs. Once he expended the fuel in the drop tanks, he could clean up the plane and fly at altitude. The range is about 1,800 miles with the drop tanks, so he might be able to land the Raptor.”

“And get arrested and shot?”

“Not if he played his cards right.”

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Martial law occurs when the military assumes police powers because local authorities and courts aren't functioning. Although the president usually imposes martial law, federal regulation allows for a *local commander* to do so *on the spot, if the circumstances demand immediate action*. Federal armed forces are expected to relinquish these powers as soon as the local government is once again operable. During martial law, the military may arrest and try civilians, seize private property, and institute curfews, among other emergency powers.

“You do know that Obama declared martial law with a dusk to dawn curfew, didn't you?”

“We're going to have to pay better attention to the radio. At the present time, all of the employees and their families are either here at the Station or over at the Lodge.”

“When did you do that?”

“Last week, mostly on a whim. In an emergency, we could shut down the 3 plants and be sheltered in time to avoid radiation, biological weapons, chemical weapons or a big group of bad guys.”

“Are you getting warnings from those nets you belong to?”

“Just about every day; however, that's been going on since before Y2K.”

“Keep us posted.”

“Will do.”

“Gary, Bob.”

“What's happening in Missouri?”

“We had the military show up today and try to take over the Station.”

“How many did you kill?”

“I didn’t count, maybe a squad or two. We had 1 dead and a bunch wounded, 2 critically, 5 seriously and more with lesser wounds.”

“Who shot first?”

“I did; put one right between that L-T’s eyes.”

“What was it, a Platoon?”

“Three rifle squads and one weapons squad. We got those new .50 caliber machine guns.”

“How many?”

“Three machineguns and one Mk 19 Mod 3.”

“What’s the model of those machineguns?”

“You said they were M2E2s in your story, but these are marked M2A1.”

“Are you fixed ok on ammo?”

“We’re a mite short on that; all we have is what was in those Hummers.”

“Are you anywhere near Ft. Leonard Wood?”

“About 150 miles. Oh, I get it... that will be our MCLB, Barstow.”

“Right. Wash the blood off those uniforms and go requisition some ammo. If things are as bad as I think they are, the last thing they’re going to be worrying about is paperwork. Take a big truck, those .50 caliber ammo cans only hold 100 rounds. If you can get a M107 and some Raufoss, send it my way.”

“That would depend on how many we can get. How do you propose to get a .50 caliber rifle into California?”

“The same way I got my Taurus, get someone to personally deliver it. Just tell them you don’t have any fruit or vegetables and don’t mention guns.”

“Yeah, right.”

The Lodge – Chapter 14

“Hey Bob, I’m serious. Get some of that M1022 while you’re at it.”

“Ball ammo?”

“Match grade ball ammo that duplicates the ballistics of the Mk211.”

“Now let me ask you a question. Can you even pick up an M107?”

“Well...I’ve never tried. You get the rifle and I’ll start lifting weights.”

“You have a set of weights?”

“Not too big, 1, 2 and 4 pound dumbbells. When Damon brought my Taurus, he showed me all of the different movements to build each muscle.”

“That’s not enough weight to build muscle.”

“In that case, I’ll use my rifle case as a weight.”

“What’s that go?”

“It feels like it weighs a ton. The empty case weighs about 10 pounds plus the shotgun and rifle each go about the same. Thirty pounds not counting the ammo.”

“How much ammo?”

“Nine rounds of 00 buck. But wait for the punch line.”

“What’s that?”

“I used my UPS scale and weighed it. It actually weighs 37 pounds.”

“Why didn’t you say that in the first place?”

“I needed to fill in a few lines in the story? It was more fun making you guess? Actually, I temporarily forgot.”

“You watch your six and I’ll see what I can do about a rifle and ammo for you. Gonna be a bitch getting it to you because of the curfew.”

“What curfew?”

“You haven’t heard?”

“I might have forgotten, remind me.”

“Obama declared martial law and a dusk to dawn curfew.”

“No he didn’t.”

“Why do you say that?”

“Fleataxi said that only the military can declare martial law.”

“Did you correct him?”

“You know me, he left the opening.”

“Gotta go.”

“Bye...”

◦

The truth was that Fleataxi and I were friends. We corrected each other, usually in as nasty fashion, as was available. I had to be nice to Fleataxi; he sold the CD containing all of my stories. I gave Damon a copy of all of the pdf story files on my computer back in December '08. It included several I didn't write. I did receive the slide stop in the mail after the first of the year. I got it together, by gosh and by golly. I had to get Amy to rack the slide to load the first round.

It sound to me like Bob was up to his butt in alligators. Maybe not; the lakes in Missouri don't have gators, as far as I know. I didn't expect him to find me a M107 or the ammo; or, if he did, to deliver same. I'd purchased the NM flashhider, the alignment tool and the pliers from Fulton Armory and had them shipped to somewhere in Arkansas. They had been reshipped and I very carefully removed the muzzle brake and replaced it with the flashhider. Had I a choice, I'd have had a gunsmith do it... and, to that, I added the puny M6 bayonet. I had to wonder if Bob looked for a 16" bayonet for me that would fit my M1A. After doing my usual search on the web, I determined that there was a better than even chance that a Garand bayonet would work on the M1A. It was information I got reading about the M5A1 bayonet that *clued* me in. If Bob found one, he could try it on his M14.

◦

He wanted a M107 and that was specifically a M82A1M. TOM didn't say how many magazines he wanted, but I'd read his stories and the answer would be 10. On top of that, he wanted about 35 cans of Mk211MP and a like quantity of M1022, ergo, about 4,000 rounds of each. I sent him an email and told him to start lifting weights. I had no real expectation of getting one from Fort Leonard Wood. About the only place I was fair-

ly sure I could find one was the Army Sniper School at Fort Benning, Georgia. Students are trained on the M24 SWS, M107 rifle, and the M110 Semi-Automatic Sniper System (Knight's Armament Company).

The rifle was previously known as the XM110, but the US Army has dropped its experimental status. It is manufactured by Knight's Armament Company in Titusville, Florida, though the complete system incorporates a Leupold 3.5-10x daytime optic, Harris swivel bipod, AN/PVS-14 night sight and PALs magazine pouches of yet unpublished origin. The company name for the rifle is SR-M110 SASS, but the US Army official designation is the M110 SASS. The rifle has ambidextrous features such as a double-sided magazine release, safety selector switch, and bolt catch.

That Lieutenant was a mite smaller than yours truly, but we moved his insignia and so forth to my set of ACUs and I looked right spiffy, even if I say so myself. Most of my guys, but not all, had ACUs and we made short work of moving chevrons and so forth. It appeared we'd take Evan's semi and trailer, plus two Hummers that we'd borrow back from the Sheriff. I went to arrange that and asked if there was anything he wanted.

"Well...I wouldn't mind having one of those .50 caliber rifles."

"You too?"

"Oh, you want one too?"

"I suppose so, but I was thinking about my friend TOM. He asked me to get him a 16" bayonet that would fit on his M1A rifle plus a M107 and around 8,000 rounds of ammo."

"That's a lot of ammo, how much would it weigh?"

"In round numbers, 2,500 pounds, not counting packaging."

"Would you have to haul it far?"

"I checked. The one way distance is roughly 1,600 miles."

"Where does he live?"

"Palmdale, California."

"Was there some stink about .50 caliber rifles in California?"

"Yep, they're illegal."

"What about the ammo?"

“Thirty five cans of Mk211MP are 4,200 rounds and the federal tax stamp is \$200 per round.”

“What kind of ammo is that?”

“HEIAP, high explosive incendiary armor piercing.”

“I’ll take some too.”

“Do you want the M1022 Match ball too?”

“Why not, we have terrorists now.”

“Yeah, and some of them are wearing our uniforms. How did you square that with the Army?”

“I explained that they went up against a secure energy plant and tried to force their way in. Absent any orders to the contrary, the plant security people engaged their Platoon, but only after shots were fired.”

“If you ever need work, let me know. I’ll run for Congress and you can write my material. (Remember, a Sheriff is an elected official, ergo a politician.) We have 3 DMs from Desert Storm and I’m sure that they’ll want M107s. You want one, TOM wants one and I want one. I can’t imagine I can get 6 M107s, 25,000 rounds of Mk211MP and the same amount of M1022. Wish me luck; I’m going to need it.”

“Where are you going looking?”

“Fort Leonard Wood. We’re taking Evan’s semi and I’d like to borrow two Hummers for escort duty. We’ll use one with a .50 and the other with the 40mm. Our only limit will be weight, 40 tons and we’ll make an effort to bypass any weigh stations.”

“How about I get you a MHP as an escort? He can get you past the weigh stations.”

“Works for me.”

“When are you leaving?”

“Six am tomorrow, dressed up in our nice soldier uniforms.”

“BDUs?”

“ACUs.”

“Do you have paperwork?”

“We’re hoping we won’t need it because it will be an emergency resupply.”

“Good luck.”

“Thanks, we’ll need it.”

The rest of the day was spent learning what I had to know to properly portray an officer. Sloppy salutes except for higher ranking officers, when to salute and not salute, and how to explain away the inconsistencies in our appearance. M14 and HK417 plus 2 590A1s were the shoulder weapons we planned to take and everyone would be armed with a P-14 except for me. The Army hadn’t used the .45, except for SOCOM units, since 1984. To top it off, most of our LBE was ALICE gear, not MOLLE.

I had a few explanations ready, as need, but would they be enough? Would the Army actually come up with a semi load of weapons and ordnance? One of my explanations included the fact that some Platoon got shot up trying to take over a power plant. I got up early the next day and made sure I shaved closely and had Amanda give me a quick buzz cut so my hair was *nice and tight*. Then, I dressed up in my soldier suit and added my pistol belt. As much as it pained me, I took a soldier’s M16A2, loaded with M995 AP ammo. My guys were all loaded up with M993 AP ammo. The .45s carried Gold Dot and the few shotguns 3” 15 pellet 00 buck. We left around 0630 and arrived at Leonard Wood a little after 0830.

“Yes sir, are you expected?”

“I doubt it corporal; we’re on an emergency resupply mission.”

“Where are you coming from sir?”

“Henry Country. I take it you heard about the shootout where a Platoon was either killed, wounded or captured trying to carry out an order to capture that power plant.”

“No sir, we haven’t heard anything.”

“That’s strange. The Sheriff up there said he made the notifications. We’re here to re-supply mostly on ammo plus a few weapons if they’re available.”

“Hang on while I check sir. I will need to see your military ID.”

One of the locals in Clinton had claimed he could duplicate any ID, including the highly secure military ID. He’d stayed up all night providing my few guys with authentic looking military IDs. He’d used the information on the dead or wounded soldiers as a basis for his work. We’d know in short order if he succeeded.

“May I see your ID sir?”

The Lodge – Chapter 15

“Here you go. Sorry, it’s a replacement, I lost the original.”

“Sir, it scanned ok. May I see the IDs of your other soldiers?”

“Have the First Shirt gather up the IDs and turn them over to the Corporal.”

“Yes sir.”

“Sir, I’m sorry, but one of the IDs won’t pass muster.”

“Which one?”

“Your First Sergeant’s.”

“Well crap. Sergeant Jones, front and center.”

“Sir?”

“The corporal says your ID won’t pass.”

“It ain’t the first time Lieutenant. Those SOBs have issued me three and I’ve had a problem with everyone.

“Ok if I vouch for the Sergeant?”

“I can allow that, but he’d better resolve that while he’s here on post. I have an escort coming to direct you to the officer in charge of logistics.”

“Thank you Corporal.”

A few minutes later, a Hummer with a driver and a commissioned officer appeared and led our way to the Logistics Officer.

“I understand that you need an emergency resupply?”

“Yes sir.”

“This isn’t standard procedure.”

“Sir, these aren’t normal times. We mostly need .50 caliber linked ammo, 7.62 by 51mm rifle ammo if available, 5.56, a small supply of grenades to fill in what we’ve used and 6 rifles complete with assorted ammo. Last but not least, we need replacement M136 AT4s and 40mm grenades.”

“What model rifle? And tell me why I’m talking to a 60 year old Lieutenant instead of a 23 year old Lieutenant.”

“The rifle is the M107 and the Lieutenant is an acting rank sir. My permanent rank is First Sergeant, E8.”

“You should have contacted Fort Benning. How long have you been in this man’s Army?”

“Yes sir, there isn’t time and we need the weapons now. I’ve been in the Army for 38 years.”

“Let me check and see if we even have 6 M107s.”

“Yes sir. Is it ok if my men and I grab some coffee while you’re doing that?”

“Be back in 30 minutes or less.”

“Yes sir.”

“So, what’s the deal L-T?”

“He’s checking on their supply of M107s.”

“How about the ammo for the rifles?”

“Won’t make much difference if we can’t get the rifles. If we get all six, are you up to a trip to California?”

“Riding shotgun for Evan?”

“Yes, you and one other man in the cab and one of those Hummers with a .50 caliber mounted for escort.”

“Where in California?”

“Palmdale.”

“Where’s that?”

“About 50 miles northeast of LA.”

“How would we get there?”

“Take I-40 to Barstow, California; turn south on I-15 and get off at Palmdale Road in Victorville; you’ll be in Palmdale within an hour.”

“How long will it take?”

“If you swap drivers and drive straight through, about 24 hours. You’ll have to unload the stuff; he’s a bit long in the tooth. Then you can lay over for a night and come back home. About 2½ days, altogether. You can use the company credit card for fuel, eats and the motel.”

“Lieutenant, this is highly irregular but, you’re in luck. It seems that a shipment of rifles and ammo was misdirected here. We were getting ready to ship them to Fort Benning to the sniper school. Are you prepared to sign for the things on your list?”

“Yes sir.”

“You don’t need that semi; the stuff won’t fill the box.”

“No sir, but the civilian driver said something about weight limits. The people we’re re-supplying didn’t say anything about rifle ammo, but if you have some, we could use it to fill a few holes. I’m sure they’d appreciate it.”

“What would you need?”

“M993 and M995 plus some of the M118LR for their Designated Marksmen.”

“Would ten thousand rounds of the AP and half a dozen cans of M118LR be enough?”

“Yes sir. There are some other things. They could use additional grenades to fill in what they’ve used, replacement M136 AT4s and 40mm belted grenades.”

“It sounds like we’re fighting a full scale war. Give this to the Command Sergeant Major and they’ll load your truck.”

“Yes sir. Thank you sir, some of those civilians are just plain nasty. Some of them are better armed than we are.”

◦

“It looks like you’re headed to California. Take TOM a case of those grenades while you’re at it.”

“One case?”

“Let’s see how many cases they load. TOM doesn’t much care for the AT4; but, he’d take M-72s any day.”

“I thought they quit using those.”

“The USMC still uses them and they’ve modified the rocket to the point where there are something on the order of eleven different models, the original plus 10 variants.”

We stood and watched as they loaded the trailer. I was dumbfounded when they loaded 24 cases of M67 grenades. But, it got better...those AT4s don’t weigh that much and after the ammo and grenades were loaded, they filled the empty space with AT4s. Five M136 AT4s, each wrapped in a plastic barrier bag, are packed together in a wooden container. The containers are too heavy to stack more than four deep on the pallets. However, they packed the wooden crates one at a time, two layers deep.

After we were loaded, Evan ran the truck over their scale. We were a little over the weight limit. However, we only had to go about 150 miles and drove around 50mph. When we got back, I called the Sheriff and told him to come by for his new rifle and ammo. We unloaded the truck, sorting the contents into piles. Evan went to borrow a 2½ ton truck for the trip to California.

When he returned, we loaded the M107 first, followed by the grenades, .50 caliber ammo and finally the M136s. If asked, Evan would claim that he was making a delivery to MCLB, Barstow, a minor lie; he was driving by the place. They left early the next morning and I sent TOM an email that said, “Smile, you’re on candid camera.”

“His reply was, “Everything?”

I replied, “Everything and more. Do you play baseball? The Law wouldn’t cooperate but we talked to his big brother.”

His reply was a blank email with a smiley face. If I know TOM, he was thinking, “What the hell, they can only put you in jail once.” Evan had the bayonet, the M42 16” that hadn’t been cut down to 10” and it fit my M14. Locking TOM up for a week could amount to a life sentence if they didn’t get him his meds. Two days later I received a short message from TOM, “Package Delivered, I’m working on fortifications.”

Gary and Sharon had put in a fence enclosing their backyard in 2007. It was concrete block, 6’ high with rebar and concrete. At the back, it was stepped up to match the fence on the back lot line. He’d mentioned on the phone that he’d like to have a similar fence, except with wrought iron between columns in the front. I can just see him out there in the front yard using a file to sharpen the pressed spear points at the top of the fence.

We had bigger fish to fry and I couldn’t spend a lot of time worrying about TOM. If the Army came once, they were sure to return. I almost visualized Gary’s son Derek driving a M1A2 Abrams up to our gate until I remembered that he switched to artillery, specifically counter battery target acquisition. He used something called counter battery radar which had a computer and showed the location of the firing cannon.

The AN/TPQ-37 operations shelter is identical to that used with the AN/TPQ-36(V)5 and consists of an Operations Control Group mounted on an M-35 series Truck, and the MEP-115A, 60 kilowatt, 400 hertz Generator Set mounted on a 5-ton Truck. This truck also tows the Antenna Transceiver Group consisting of the Phased Array Antenna, Transmitter, Receiver and associated electronics mounted on the M-1048 Trailer, a 6-ton four wheel flatbed Cargo Trailer. Two AN/TPQ-37s are assigned to the Target Acquisition Battery of each division and employed with the AN/TPQ-36. The AN/TPQ-37 is larger than the AN/TPQ-36 and its target acquisition range is greater. The system uses a combination of radar techniques and computer controlled functions to detect and accurately locate enemy artillery and rocket weapons to permit rapid engagement with counter fire.

I tried, anyway. I got curious and looked it up. Gary had taught me quite a bit about searching for unusual things on the internet. Say, you don't suppose that instead of Al Gore inventing the internet...nah, not likely. Gary got his first computer in 1982 and the first TCP/IP-based wide-area network was operational by January 1, 1983 when all hosts on the ARPANET were switched over from the older NCP protocols. The opening of the network to commercial interests began in 1988. I checked Wiki about *The Internet* and found that Al Gore's name isn't mentioned; not even once? That's pretty short sighted, since Al claimed that he invented the Internet.

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Be that as it may, I have fish frying. It seemed that 2 things were certain. First, assuming the Lieutenant wasn't operating outside of his orders, we had the Army mad at us. Second, that Colonel at Fort Leonard Wood will check with the guard who ran my ID card and learn that the data on the card said I was a 24 year old 2nd Lieutenant and the Army would be even angrier with us. You pays your money and you takes your chances; funny, I never thought that it would apply to me.

"Evan, how was the trip?"

"Boring. Say, can your friend even pick up that rifle we delivered?"

"I don't know, maybe he'll put wheels on the bipod. What was he carrying?"

"A file. He told me he'd been working on the spear points."

"Did he have any weapons?"

"A Mossberg was slung across his back, muzzle down, a small pistol in an IWB holster in the middle of his back and a M1A was leaning up against that fence he was working on."

The Lodge – Chapter 16

“Did he have any ammo?”

“He sort of looked like a cross between Pancho Villa and one of those Rhodesian soldiers. Two bandoleers of shotgun shells plus that multi pocket vest full of magazines. He had a Rambo knife taped upside down on the left strap and a multitool plus a second case with a Case pocketknife and 2-cell flashlight on the right strap. Oh, he was wearing a pistol belt with a GI .45 holster plus 3 double magazine pouches, two canteens and Y-type ALICE suspenders. He told me that there was a stainless cup under one canteen and a stove under the other. He had a fanny pack, but wasn't wearing it.”

“Was he getting around ok? He has a wheelchair.”

“I didn't see a wheelchair. He was using a grinder he borrowed from a neighbor to put a rough edge on those spear points and finishing them with that file. He asked us to unload the ordnance and stack it on his patio. He had a residential propane fueled generator and two very large buried propane tanks. He was waiting for his son-in-law and his boys to refill the holes. While we were unloading he managed to sharpen 6 or 7 more spear points and was working on the last one with a file when we left. I can't say as I've ever seen a man on a step ladder to work on something no more than 6' off the ground.”

“So he worked steady?”

“If stopping to catch his breath after grinding each spear point and after filing each spear point counts, I'd have to say yes.”

“He also has COPD and diabetes.”

“Really? He always had a Kool 100 hanging out of his mouth.”

“I'd have thought he'd asked you to put the ammo in his garage.”

“He did and we looked. They'd been shopping recently and there wasn't room. He's a very strange man. He had an upright freezer and a refrigerator without a freezer in his garage. Plus, he had an Amana style refrigerator/freezer in the kitchen and another refrigerator on their back deck. That patio slab is about 15'-16' deep and covers from one fence to the other. It's L shaped and the ell runs up to their kitchen door.”

“I take it he was grateful for the rifle?”

“Decidedly; however, he did ask where the M118LR was. Had to tell him that we only brought what he wanted plus a few extras. He was excited by the bayonet and slid it on his rifle first thing, leaving the scabbard on. Those rifles are impressive with a bayonet that long on them”

“Are you up to one more trip?”

“Urgent or can I have a day or two to rest up?”

“One at least. Your destination is Kansas City, Missouri. I’ll give you a PO to cover what you get. I’ve already arranged it with upper management and the Sam’s Club you’re going to.”

“What’s the cargo?”

“Several tons of food. You give them the PO and they’ll load the trailer.”

“You sure this is legit?”

“I was told to plan on a siege. The fear is that we had that battle with the Army; they’ll be back in force. It will be a Company or maybe a Battalion. My instructions are to defend the Station at all costs.”

“This world is getting crazier by the minute.”

“Tell me about it.”

He spent a few minutes telling me what he’d seen on his trip to California. Some of what he’d seen before he got to California was mildly interesting. What he saw after he got to California was downright weird and I tended to classify it as business as usual. Two days later, he made the trip to Kansas City and returned with a 40’ trailer load of food. The food was divided between the cafeteria and the Lodge. From this point on, we rarely left the Station.

Although we had a mountain of coal, that didn’t stop deliveries, replacing what we used up. From my reading the news on the internet, I expected thermonuclear weapons to start flying any old time. Of course, some of us had been expecting that for years and as long as they weren’t aimed at us, it was the same old, same old. We’d already had a couple of nuclear exchanges that didn’t involve the US.

◦

“Lock it down.”

“Have you heard something?”

“Orders from Kansas City. The only in and out will be the coal trains.”

“What aren’t you telling me?”

“I’m not telling you why they issued the order because, frankly, I don’t know. How are we fixed on everything?”

“We have plenty of food for the immediate future. We can rototill the lawn in front of the Lodge and plant a garden, if necessary. Off hand, I’d say we could go as long as we have coal, assuming we didn’t get any more coal deliveries.”

“We can get some commodities, if needed; what would you recommend?”

“Bulk commodities? Corn, wheat, beans, rice and oats.”

“Can your father-in-law pick them up for us?”

“I assume so, I’d have to ask.”

“I’ll cut some purchase orders and he can go get them. We’ll need storage for, say, about 5 tons of each. You probably have a better idea on proportions than I do so I’ll leave the quantity blank on the purchase orders.”

“I’d match the beans with the rice. In order of largest to smallest quantities, we’ll buy corn, rice and beans, wheat and finally the oats.”

“That should work, what about meat?”

“That’s a different story. Butchered and frozen meat only lasts about 2 years maximum. If we replace as we use it, I believe we can get by. However, someone is going to have to go to Clinton weekly to pick up another load of beef, pork and poultry.”

“We’ll use an open PO for that. Determine the quantities we need and fill in the PO I give you.”

“Ok. Anything else?”

“That’s it, for now. Like I said, lock it down.”

We were basically locked down already and it really would take some kind of armored vehicle to enter the Station uninvited. I had in mind a Bradley more than an Abrams. It seemed that the Army had other problems around the country and for whatever reason; we slipped off their radar for the moment.

“Hey Bob.”

“TOM?”

“Yeah, how’s it going?”

“The Station is on lockdown and has been for nearly a month. The Station manager loaded us up on food and bought bulk grains to tide us over. Evan leaves weekly to pick up fresh meat to replace what we eat. I hear you’re happy with the bayonet.”

“Absolutely. Plus that new rifle I have is something to behold. I’ve been lifting weights to build up muscle tone so I can tote it, if need be.”

“What kind of weights?”

“Well, I’ve been using the assembled rifle ‘cause that’s how much weight I have to lift. I’ve been lucky and haven’t dropped it, yet. Got the front fence finished and added some of that privacy screen so people can’t see in. If I could, I’d put in concertina, but there’s some damned ordinance against it in residential neighborhoods.”

“How big are your propane tanks?”

“One is 5,000 and the other is 10,000. They’re both full and only run the generator. I got jets for the dryer, hot water heater, furnace and stove from my neighbor Dick. He said if we lose gas, he’d install them. Been reading the news?”

“Every day. Anything in particular?”

“Nope, but I have a hinky feeling; just can’t put my finger on it.”

“Did I send you the news article about Russia and China building their forces on the Mongolian border?”

“If you did, I missed it. What’s the deal with the Russians? They cut off the gas to Europe way back when and haven’t increased their shipments back to the previous level. The Ukraine is bleeding off a little of what they send and the Europeans are mad at both Russia and the Ukraine.”

“They’ve been doing that off and on since 2007, at least.”

“I don’t really follow that, Bob. Maybe I do and can’t remember. Tell me about this lockdown.”

“Orders from Kansas City. That’s all I really know TOM. Somebody is worried about something, maybe ELF.”

“Or, the Army?”

“We sort of fell off their radar. If they come back and bring any kind of armor, we’re toast. Are you happy with the bayonet?”

“What’s not to like? Got it as sharp as a butcher knife. The only problem I can see is that you can’t use a bayonet and a silencer at the same time. Since I can’t get a silencer, I’m as happy as a June bug.”

“We have some silencers; I guess I should have sent one.”

“What kind?”

“Advanced Armaments Corporation.”

“Thanks, but I’ll get by. My main problem is my limited mobility.”

“Didn’t get the wheelchair fixed?”

“The company quit making them and Social Security won’t pay for a replacement. It would be cheaper to buy a motor scooter. Not to change the subject, but I not only have that propane fueled generator, I still have the PowerBOSS. I only have 2 drums and 12 cans of gas so I hope I don’t have to use it. I doubt 170 gallons of gas would last very long. Gotta go; call me if anything turns up.”

He hung up before I could even say goodbye. I wondered why he really called; working on a sequel to our story? Once before, he told me their house was stucco, just like 90% of the homes in California. Stucco won’t stop bullets, I wondered if he got some road plate to line the walls of his home. If he did, he should be ok except for spalling. I wanted to ask if he got a shelter built. If he did, either Evan didn’t see it or didn’t mention it. A person can have all the boy toys there are, but without some sort of shelter, those boy toys might not do him a bit of good.

◦

Yes, I had a shelter. It was a concrete block partially above the ground shelter covered with 6’ of earth. It was only partially above the ground because we only dug down far enough to get the cover dirt. It had the American Safe Rooms filter and was equipped with used electrical appliances. The blast door was made out of road plate 3” thick. The generator was underground so I could change the oil

◦

“Evan, did you see a shelter in TOM’s back yard?”

“I saw a big pile of dirt so maybe that was the shelter. You don’t mean to say that the guy who writes survival fiction doesn’t have a shelter do you?”

The Lodge – Chapter 17

My friend TOM had a definite pattern to his stories. First, came the preparation and second, when they were essentially complete, came the disasters, at least one and normally three because he claimed that bad things happened in threes. Since a disaster for one person may not be a disaster for another, we were ahead of him by one. All they'd been through was the power outage while we'd also been attacked by ELF. And, if you noticed, he had all of his favorite ordnance, mostly thanks to us. Rather than spending money on ordnance he'd finally put up the wall, installed a propane fuelled genset and 15,000 gallons of propane.

Evan hadn't told me how big the mound of dirt (their shelter) was, but it probably went at least 600ft². As far as I could see, this was a by the numbers situation. I tried to add up the violations of California law he'd committed and lost track. There was the flashhider with the bayonet lug, 2 points. The Barrett was one more cross for him to bear and those Raufoss rounds were probably worth life in prison without the possibility of parole. If asked, I'm sure he say, *Screw 'em if they can't take a joke*. They should have moved to Sedona at the height of the housing boom. I didn't realize that the M1022 was also illegal.

The stage was set even before Obama took office. Around Christmas was that swarm at Yellowstone. Around the first of the year, they almost had a tsunami in Sumatra and of course Israel invaded Gaza. It was around that time that Russia cut off the gas and only shortly after that Obama cut off the power for 6 months. Next was the buildup on the Mongolian border and that Iran-Israel thing plus the India-Pakistan exchange.

We had our own problems with the shutdown and the attack from ELF. More recently, we'd locked down based on orders from Kansas City. The only good news was the emergency resupply we managed to get by that Colonel at Ft. Leonard Wood. Sharing it with Kent and TOM proved to be a good idea. Kent would back us to the hilt and TOM would pass along any news from the west coast. I'd sure like to get to the PRK and see his setup.

"Bob, you have a call on line 2."

"Who is it?"

"Said his name was Tom."

"TOM?"

"I have to make this quick, Bob. Arnold activated the CNG and the California State Military Reserve. They're going door to door doing a gun grab. They won't find mine; are they doing the same in Missouri?"

“I haven’t heard a word, probably not. Did you give them all a funeral and plant them 6’ deep?”

“That wouldn’t do me any good if I did that. I’ve put up the big rifle and ammo plus put the Taurus pistol where they’re not likely to find them. We’ll be ok unless they find the armory built off the shelter. Plus I have another small problem; the bayonet is a spear point and sharpened on both sides.”

“So?”

“Double edged knives are illegal out here.”

“And you sharpened the top of your Rambo knife, right?”

“Well, I have one more that’s only sharp on one side and it’s set up like the Rambo. By the way, thanks for the M136s.”

“It wasn’t easy, that’s for sure. I hope it is enough.”

“Oh, I think 30 will be more than plenty. Thanks for the hand grenades, they may come in handy.”

“Tell me something; are you going to get out and about or just defend the home place.”

“Don’t know. We’ll have to play that by ear.”

“It’s time for my run up to the Lodge to check on security. Is there anything else?”

“There was and I’ll call back when I remember what it was.”

“Did you plant a garden this year?”

“Sure did, it helped to disguise the mound of dirt covering the shelter. Sharon is canning the last batch of green beans and we plan to can some beef, some stew plus some spaghetti sauce. By the way, Chris got me some road plate and we lined the walls in my office. I got a Vietnam era flack vest to protect me against spall. If you don’t know, Yellowstone has been having another swarm. There have been over 400 earthquakes in that last 36 hours. There were 4 over magnitude 5, 7 over 4 and about 20 over 3. We’ve been strapping all the furniture in place, just in case.”

“What’s going to come first, an exchange with Russia or Yellowstone?”

“Call that one even money Bob. There are too many choices and I’m not sure which, just that it’s not a matter of if.”

He should have picked Yellowstone, but hindsight is 20/20. During the weeks after Christmas 2008, Yellowstone had around 600 earthquakes and it had people worried. During the same period, the largest earthquake in the US was in Alaska and went over 7 on the Richter scale. I started to try and find time to follow Yellowstone but my duties interfered. We had the Station ready to separate from the grid at a moment's notice, just in case.

The next email said, "500 and rising." It came long after he called me. I wrote back, "Are you okay?" He replied "600 now, some up to magnitude 6. I'll be okay, depending on how the wind blows; plus we do have the shelter." As far as I was concerned, that tore it, I moved the Station to THREATCON CHARLIE, skipping BRAVO. I got called on the carpet to explain my move and I gave the Station manager copies of the emails from TOM.

"Why CHARLIE, won't we have ample notice?"

"We should have notice. However, if Yellowstone goes, it will pull down the grid. You need to be ready to pull the plug in a heartbeat before the grid overtaxes our system and takes out our protective equipment."

"A cascading failure becomes much more common close to our critical point. The power law relationship is seen in both historical data and model systems. The practice of operating these systems much closer to their maximum capacity leads to magnified effects of random, unavoidable disturbances due to aging, weather, human interaction etc. While near the critical point, these failures have a greater effect on the surrounding components due to individual components carrying a larger load. This results in the larger load from the failing component having to be redistributed in larger quantities across the system, making it more likely for additional components not directly affected by the disturbance to fail, igniting costly and dangerous cascading failures. These initial disturbances causing blackouts are all the more unexpected and unavoidable due to actions of the power suppliers to prevent obvious disturbances (cutting back trees, separating lines in windy areas, replacing aging components etc). The complexity of most power grids often makes the initial cause of a blackout extremely hard to identify. We'll have to shut down immediately if the grid fails."

"If you say so, I'm not an engineer."

"Fair enough, but you understand the dynamics. CHARLIE is approved. Are you planning on increasing the number of security on duty?"

"I already have; we'll be working 12 on/12 off until this is sorted out. I've notified the Sheriff and the Chief of Police in Clinton. The last time Yellowstone blew up was 640,000 years ago. The Lava Creek Tuff distributed in a radial pattern around the caldera and is formed of 1,000 cubic kilometers (240 cu mi) of ash in pyroclastic flows. Thickness of the tuff layer ranges from 180–200 m."

“Did it reach Missouri?”

“Almost to St. Louis. Now understand it wasn’t the largest eruption, just the most widespread. Huckleberry Ridge was the first and largest and it reached at least to Clinton. The first eruption (Huckleberry Ridge) exploded 2,400 times as much rock as the 1980 Mt. St. Helens eruption. The ash from the first eruption goes as far west as California, east as Iowa, and north to Saskatchewan, and south to the Gulf of Mexico.

The second eruption came from the Island Park caldera and created the Mesa Falls Tuff 1.3 million years ago. This is the smallest of the three eruptions and actually lies in the Huckleberry Ridge Caldera. The third eruption (Lava Creek) was also quite large as it covers parts of Huckleberry Ridge and it ruined parts of the Washburn Range. The Lava Creek caldera actually started to evolve 1.2 million years ago when the magma started rising to create a bulge with tons of fractures. The rhyolitic flow created ring fractures all around the caldera. These fractures went straight into the magma chamber where it started to relieve the pressure by having three eruptive pulses 150,000 years ago, 110,000 years ago and 70,000 years ago. The total rhyolitic rock produced covers about 240 cubic miles.”

“We’ll be ready to pull the plug and shut down at the first hint of a cascading failure.”

“Gotcha. Meanwhile, I’ll keep my eyes on news reports about Russia and China and check the USGS daily to follow what’s going on at Yellowstone.”

“The more warning we get the better; I’d prefer some time to shut down the turbines.”

“I’ll do the best I can, but if I move to THREATCON DELTA, we should shutdown 2 of the 3 plants.”

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While Bob was doing what he needed to do in Clinton, I had my firearms out and was instructing Sharon and Amy in their use and care. I showed them where I had the various things stored and Amy took it upon herself to move the extra ammo to the shelter. We organized things as we could and even moved about half of the food to the entrance hallway leading to the shelter’s homemade blast door. I also added an additional 110 gallons of stabilized regular gasoline bringing our total to 280 gallons or roughly 500 plus hours of runtime for the smaller backup generator. Long Valley had definitely covered the high desert with ash when it erupted, although it didn’t appear from the small maps I had that any of the Yellowstone ash had.

I reflected on MSM’s most recent reporting and there was no way one could describe it as *fair*. Yellow journalism came as a result of a war of sorts between Joseph Pulitzer and William Randolph Hurst. In this day and age, if it couldn’t be sensationalized it was rarely reported. MSM had put Obama in office and had to live with their choice. All but Fox News was pro Obama and I wondered why we never saw him in his cape and blue tights. The only attacks directed to his administration were against his choices for some

of the cabinet members and they were only mildly rebuked. Did I like him? No. Did I approve of the job he was doing? Partially, especially after he allowed the coal fuel plants to reopen. Would I vote for him the next time? Only if I was dead and someone stole my identity.

The only thing better than 750 lawyers at the bottom of the ocean is 750 politicians at the bottom of the ocean and the only thing better than 750 politicians at the bottom of the ocean was 750 reporters at the bottom of the ocean. If we could manage to get all 2,250 at the bottom of the ocean at the same time, I start to look around for the Christ because He was surely coming.

Meanwhile we all had to get by any way we could. I could weed most of the garden with our tiny rototiller and hoe the terraces on the mound covering the shelter. It was a 2½ day process and I did it once a week. I failed to distinguish my wants from my needs; the M107 was a clear example of that. I couldn't even take it outside our home for fear of someone turning me into the cops. I got Ronald to take me out into the desert east of Palmdale and we were able to sight it in. My rifle came equipped with a Leupold 4.5-14x50 LR/T M1 riflescope. It didn't have much more recoil than a standard 12 gauge shotgun.

Food wise, the freezer was full and we had 300# of bread flour, 100# of sugar, 60 cans of Folgers, yeast, spices and assorted beans including 200# of pinto beans, 15 cases of bottled water, 6 cases each of 3 kinds of vegetables, 2 cases each of 3 kinds of Campbell's soup, oatmeal, pancake mix, Aunt Jemima syrup, 6 kinds of canned meat in large quantities, bulk packages of pasta and so forth.

Our shelter was 24' wide by 36' long or 864ft² and the generator was in the outside hallway beyond the blast door. I didn't have a ham radio, only a receiver and 6 of the GMRS/FRS radios, which are strictly line of sight. It would have been nice to have the Radius 50 radios back, but Chris said no. The old Emerson 13" color TV went from my office to the shelter and I put in a new digital office LED TV, the cheapest one we could find, Vizio.

Lowenstern and Smith closed Yellowstone National Park to visitors until the earthquake swarm subsided. I sent an email to Bob relating that and suggested he raise his alert condition above ALPHA. All I could do now was hunker down and wait.

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I got the email and replied, "We're already at CHARLIE, and ready to pull the plug at the first sign of a cascading failure. Have you heard anything from .gov about what they're doing to prep for this potential disaster? Have they ordered evacuations? Is FEMA doing anything besides picking their nose? Has the White House made any announcements? I don't have time to check all my sources; and, if I did, I'd still have to interpret what the information meant."

After I received Bob's email, I started checking. The YVO had a notice up *suggesting* that everyone within a 100 mile radius of Norris Geyser Basin evacuate a minimum of 100 miles and preferably 200 miles further away from the Park. The American Red Cross was establishing shelters in nearly every high school gymnasium 200 miles from Norris Geyser Basin.

The Lodge – Chapter 18

Next, I checked the Dept. Of Homeland Insecurity and looked at both the earthquake site and the volcano site and found no mention of the current activity at Yellowstone. Next, I checked the newspapers in the major cities of the states involved, Wyoming, Montana and Idaho. They all confirmed the evacuation warning and the Governors of all three states had ordered evacuations.

Bob,

USGS suggests and Governors have implemented evacuation within 100 mile radius of Norris Geyser Basin. Red Cross setting up evacuation centers. FEMA waiting for it to blow before they do anything and nothing from the White House.

TOM

o

I didn't bother to reply to TOM. Instead, I began a full tour of Station and the Lodge confirming everything was ready if we had to deal with a volcanic eruption. When I finished, I set up an RSS feed on my computer linking me to the USGS. Not only did we know it wasn't a question of if, we were fairly certain what would happen. That only left the when part; however, the swarm in late 2008 and early 2009 also had people thinking that they knew the what. On top of that, in early 2009, the National Academy of Sciences produced a report for NASA saying that we'd have a massive solar storm in 2012. Could that perhaps be December 21, 2012? It's NEVER IF, only when and what.

I had my people on the platform on one of the smokestacks using it as an OP. I had a feeling that if TOM was right, we'd be able to feel the earthquake even this far away. I continued to check the volcano rss feed and finally got the impression that the when could easily be within the next 24 hours. Yellowstone seemed to be shaking almost continuously. I presumed it was magma moving to the surface and once it got there, Ka-boom.

My fellow Americans,

The USGS has indicated that the level of activity at Yellowstone National Park has reached a level where an eruption may be imminent. The Yellowstone Volcano Observatory previously posted a suggestion on its website indicating that everyone within a 100 mile radius of Yellowstone should evacuate.

The Governors of Wyoming, Montana and Idaho have ordered the evacuations several hours ago. The White House is now expanding the warning to include downwind states including Nebraska, Iowa and Missouri. Should the volcano erupt, you may expect several inches of ash. Until the eruption occurs, there is no way to estimate the total

amount of ash. The largest ever eruption, the Huckleberry Ridge Eruption, produced 2,450km³ of ash.

The American Red Cross has set up shelters for everyone beyond the expected area of the pyroclastic flow. FEMA is moving meals, medications and other supplies to those locations. We continue to observe Yellowstone and will report the activity as it occurs.

The FAA is rerouting commercial flights in advance of a possible eruption in an effort to avoid having engine flameout due to excessive ash. Finally the USGS in Pasadena has indicated what could be a precursor of a major earthquake on the San Andreas Fault occurred at 5:33am Pacific Standard Time.

Thank you.

The fat was in the fire now if the President was asking three additional states to evacuate. We couldn't evacuate as long as the Station was still up and running. It would remain so until we shut down to avoid a cascading failure. On my next trip over to the Lodge, I told Amanda and her folks that it seemed near certain that we might have a volcanic eruption.

"What are you going to do about the food in the Station Cafeteria?"

"Leave it, I suppose."

"Ok, but make sure there's power to the refrigerators and freezers. Are you going to shut the plant down?"

"That's not up to me Amanda. If there is an eruption, it will probably take out multiple power stations in the area leading to a cascading failure. The Station Manager is ready to shut down at a moment's notice and all we can do is wait and see what happens."

"What will it be like?"

"I guess that would depend on how much ash the volcano puts out. It could be as small as the Mesa Falls eruption and put out around 250km³ or bigger than the Huckleberry Ridge eruption which put out 2,450km³ of ash. Explosive eruptions are caused by magma containing dissolved gas and when the pressure is released, they explode pushing out the magma in a very short time."

"How high will the ash cloud be?"

"Mt. St. Helens sent an ash column to a height of 12 miles above the expanding crater in less than 10 minutes and spread tephra into the stratosphere for 10 straight hours. The Stratosphere begins around 6 miles up and extends to about 31 miles where it becomes the mesosphere. Krakatoa put vapor in the mesosphere."

“You didn’t answer my question.”

“Okay, I don’t know, satisfied?”

“Yes. When do you want supper ready?”

“I’m not sure. Don’t wait on me, just plan on eating around 6.”

Los Angeles was struck by a magnitude 7.2 earthquake at shortly after noon Pacific Standard Time. The quake with an epicenter located near Rialto triggered significant reaction on the Puente Hills Fault and several downtown skyscrapers either fell or experienced significant damage. The Governor ordered both the California National Guard and the California State Military Reserve to Los Angeles to help victims. We’ll be back after a word from our sponsor.

I immediately tried to call TOM and got that buzz...buzz...buzz typical of a line not in service. Palmdale was on the San Andreas Fault and supposedly it was about 3-4 miles south of where they lived. I was concerned, but what could I do? Stay the hell out of the way, I decided. They had the generator, an earthquake valve on their natural gas and had been preparing for Jellystone to go up at any time. The only thing I could do was to wait for him to call me.

“Bob, did you hear about Los Angeles?”

“I heard 7.2 and tried to call TOM. Their line must be out. I’ll have to wait for him to call.”

“Wait, there’s more. You know how earthquakes sometimes affect Yellowstone? The USGS is reporting that a vent opened, perhaps related to the earthquake, and they expect more to open. You’d better start keeping a close eye on Yellowstone and warn your boss again about a cascading failure.”

“Ok Amanda, I’m on my way.”

“My wife just called and said the Yellowstone opened a vent. She thinks it may be related to the earthquake on the San Andreas Fault.”

“Don’t you have a friend who lives on the fault line?”

“He’s about 3-4 miles north of the actual fault. They have done about everything a person could do to be prepared for an earthquake in Palmdale. The San Andreas is a slip fault that you can drive across just north of Avenue S. They haven’t had a really big earthquake in the area since the Ft. Tejon earthquake. California in 1857 was sparsely populated, especially in the regions of strongest shaking, and this fact, along with good fortune, kept the loss of life to a minimum. The effects of the quake were quite dramatic, even frightening. Were the Fort Tejon shock to happen today, the damage would easily run into billions of dollars, and the loss of life would likely be substantial, as the present

day communities of Wrightwood, Palmdale, Frazier Park, and Taft all lay upon or near the 1857 rupture area. If I recall correctly, that quake was larger with a magnitude of 7.9. Amanda said that the earthquake may have opened a vent at Yellowstone.”

“Have you checked on Yellowstone?”

“I haven’t had a chance. When I heard, I tried to call Palmdale but the lines were down. I intended to fill you in and then check the website to see what they say about the effect of the quake on Yellowstone.”

“Let me know, either way. I think we’ll stand down turbine number three for the moment.”

“Do you want me to go to THREATCON DELTA?”

“Not until you know about Yellowstone.”

By the time I was able to check, a second vent had opened at Yellowstone. A release of pressure could easily lead to an explosive eruption so I put my staff on DELTA and advised the manager he should consider shutting down turbine two as well. While I was telling my staff to bend over and kiss their butts goodbye, the boss checked the USGS website and began shutting down turbine two without my permission!

“Honey, I think it’s going to explode, make sure everyone has everything they’ll need in the shelter. Can you move a couple of sets of my 5.11s and some underwear to the shelter?”

“Should I stay there or wait?”

“That’s up to you; you’ll have time to move after the eruption.”

“I’m not sure what to do.”

“Get the stuff to the shelter and go back to the Lodge and get a cup of coffee. This is going to happen sooner rather than later. We’ve shut down turbine three and are shutting down turbine two. I’ve moved the security staff to DELTA. I don’t believe it’s going to hold off very long, but I could be wrong. Either way, we’ll be set if you move the things and are prepared to move.”

“Ok, I’ll do that. Evan wants to know if he should move their things. I’ll fill him in and tell him yes.”

“Tell April to stick close to him, just in case.”

o

I had my TV on watching Future Weapons on the Military Channel and all of a sudden, the ground started to rock and roll. Considering what happened to me the last time we had a quake when I was sitting in front of my computer (Whittier Narrows Earthquake) I got up and grabbed my monitor. The shaking lasted forever; about 60 seconds give or take. We lost power immediately and the standby generator kicked in. We had a slightly weaker aftershock about 20 minutes later. I checked the phone and we didn't have a dial tone. We didn't have the internet either because we use AT&T as our internet provider. Amy was at work and the kids were in school. Sharon and I discussed going after them and decided it would be better to wait for them to be delivered by the school buses they rode.

Audrey and Udell attend different schools so it would be two buses arriving at different times. That was a concern because I was more than sure that the same set of buses was used to deliver both of our grandchildren. I ditched my robe and got dressed, including real shoes as opposed to the moccasins I usually wear. I was wishing that I had replaced my work boots that someone had thrown out.

Next, I opened my storage cabinet and got out my Tac Force vest and began loading rifle magazines. The 6 that wouldn't fit went into my fanny pack. Amy had moved almost all of my ammo to the shelter, save a partial box of Gold Dot and a partial box of 00 buck. Fleataxi uses the Federal 00 buck and I use the 8 pellet Remington low recoil. I dumped that ammo into my fanny pack. Next, I grabbed a plastic bag and put all of my medicine in it. Sharon put hers, Amy's and the kids' in another plastic bag.

We had people we needed to contact and with the phones down, they'd be left to wonder and worry. Sharon had to call Shirley and Charlene. I needed contact Damon and Derek. We hadn't heard from Lorrie and she didn't drive. Jeffrey would be in school, too. I wanted to contact Bob, but that wasn't quite as important as contacting the family. Looking out my window, I couldn't see any homes that had collapsed. I put on my vest and opened my rifle case, loading the shotgun and inserting a magazine into the M1A. I saw Lance out front and barged out to see him. I handed him my shotgun.

"Is everyone okay at your house?"

"It's only Sharon and I and we're fine. I can loan you my 7kw generator if you need it for your refrigerator and freezer."

"We don't have a freezer, but I could use it for the refrigerator, thanks."

"I'm going to walk the neighborhood, will you come with me?"

The Lodge – Chapter 19

“I’ll get my revolver and tell Elvia.”

“Is your phone out?”

“Yes, yours?”

“Dead as a door nail.”

“Any idea how big the quake was?”

“As powerful as Northridge, maybe more.”

“I’ll be right back. Here, you hang onto your shotgun.”

o

“What’s going on? Why are they shutting down turbine one?”

“A second vent opened in Yellowstone. KCPL said to shut the Station down.”

“Did anyone call Kevin or Kent?”

“I don’t know, I didn’t.”

“I’d better call them and let them know the shutdown is voluntary because of Yellowstone.”

“They aren’t going to like it.”

“I don’t make these decisions; they’re above my pay grade. I’m sure that they’d rather know before than after. How long before we cut the power?”

“About five minutes.”

I called Kent and suggested he pass the information to Kevin. I told him we were shutting down the last turbine and the Station would go on lockdown. If he needed to contact us, we’d be at the Lodge. He wasn’t pleased at the shutdown because the ash fall hadn’t reached Missouri (yet). We secured the Station and left four guards on duty, one at each of the three gates and the fourth on the smokestack platform. They were armed and carried the CP200s with one spare charged battery. I planned to change guards every 4 hours, circumstances permitting.

I couldn’t help wondering about TOM. He’d written an email a while back saying, “The way I have it figured, you’ve had 2 disasters to our single disaster.” He was referring to

the shutdown of the grid plus the ELF attack, and at the time, he was correct. At the moment, things had evened out; we both were looking at 3 disasters. Our three would be the shutdown, the attack by ELF and the eruption of Yellowstone. His three would be the shutdown, the earthquake and the eruption of Yellowstone. I was more than a little certain that Yellowstone would have an explosive eruption and the only thing I didn't know was when.

When it did explode, we actually heard the explosion. It was much like Krakatoa which was heard nearly 3,000 miles away. That occurred around 8:45 Central Standard Time. I also discovered an error in the suggested evacuation. Previous eruptions had sent out pyroclastic flows 100km, not 100 miles. The minimum evacuation area should have been 61 miles rather than 100 miles.

The following morning we woke to a sky filled with ash. I managed to pick up BBC on the shortwave and they indicated that the explosive eruption was ongoing but diminishing. They couldn't provide an estimate of the amount of ash, suggesting that it was the largest in Yellowstone's history. Near the epicenter of the explosion and for about 100km outward was both a major pyroclastic flow and large rocks falling from the ash column which they estimated reached to the top of the Stratosphere and contained an inordinate amount of ash and sulfur. They went on to compare the eruption with their program titled *Supervolcano*.

Visibility was around 25' and varied. By this time, the security personnel were wearing the Millennium gas masks with the CBRN filters. They also wore their Camelbacks connected to the drinking tubes. The masks had the MSA ESP II Voice Amplifiers to aid in communications. Protection came in the form of the inexpensive Tyvek chemical suits, mainly to keep the dust from embedding itself in their 5.11s. The suits had integral boots, elastic wrists and a mask opening in the hood.

"We're going to need a reasonable amount of time to get the dust out of the turbines. Any idea how long it will be before we're back online?"

"Bob, I'd only be guessing. When the air begins to clear, we'll inspect and clean each turbine before restarting them. This ash seems to be as fine as talcum powder."

"That's a good description except it is as sharp as ground glass and can really screw up anything mechanical."

"How's your friend doing?"

"I don't have any idea. I tried to call but the lines were down. He's a Ham but never got around to buying a transceiver or antenna. Like I told you, they have standby power and a shelter. I couldn't even begin to guess the condition of their home being that close to the fault. If I know him, he hooked up with his neighbor who was a Special Forces officer in Vietnam and they're either closing off access to his housing tract or running a patrol around the neighborhood. He's an ornery old coot."

“Any word on how much ash was erupted?”

“All I know is what we picked up on BBC; they claimed that the ash output exceeded the Huckleberry eruption 2 million years ago.”

“Are we purifying the air being pumped into the shelter?”

“We are; but the only filter style we had was the CBRN filter. I think we can expect a volcanic winter from this eruption.”

“Is that anything like a nuclear winter?”

“About the same without the radiation and it will be quite some time before we’re able to grow crops or a garden. I thought we might rototill the grass and periodically rototill again to incorporate the ash. If necessary we can pump water from the lake for irrigation but the main problem will be the diminished sunlight.”

“No problems on food?”

“Not at the moment and we have the well for water. We also have 220 gallons of PRI-D and have stabilized the fuel in the big tank. We’ll run out of generator long before we run out of fuel.”

An explosive eruption puts out most of the ash in the first moments after the explosion. The ash column varies due to several factors, but as the ash settles out of the column, it’s deposited over the ground in its path. The prevailing winds are generally from the west but the ash pattern widens the further it is from the source.

We were locked down with a minimal force guarding the plant. Initially, people were assembled in the Lodge and the Station Cafeteria. That changed when the ash got too thick and I even pulled the 4 remaining guards. The ash cloud produced static electricity rendering our radios useless. I wondered if anyone really knew much about the eruption, especially TPTB. We wouldn’t need relief from FEMA, because, given their performance in New Orleans, KCPL apparently assumed there would be none available. Secure in our location with ample supplies of everything we needed, except fresh produce I let my thoughts wander to my friend TOM in Palmdale.

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“Did you feel that? More importantly, did you hear that? I’m nearly deaf and I heard it plainly. Any idea what it might have been?”

“How about Yellowstone? That would be about all we need on top of this earthquake. We’re all here, Amy picked up the kids plus Lorrie and Jeffrey. Amy thinks we should move to the shelter, what do you think?”

“Lance and I did two turns around the tract and it seems secure enough. That after-shock was smaller, maybe around magnitude 5. If Yellowstone did erupt, we need to be in the shelter with the air filter installed.”

“How will we know?”

“Look up and if we see ash, it was probably Yellowstone. I haven’t heard anything to suggest Long Valley was restive.”

“Are we putting the pets in the shelter too?”

“We’re down to two cats and three dogs so there’s room. Take a couple of bags of dog food and one of cat food down there, but hold off on putting the pets there until we going in and lock up. We can keep them in the entrance tunnel. And leave the blast door open a crack.”

“David and his boys will be over as soon as he gets home.”

“You mean if he gets home. Why didn’t they come with Lorrie?”

“Amy says they wouldn’t leave without their dad.”

“Do you really think David will make it from LA? There’s something like 14 bridges on 14 between I-5 and Palmdale. We can’t turn on the TV and watch Lucy Jones explaining the scope of the damage. Arnold already had the troops mobilized but they have to get to LA from wherever they are. We’re in for a longer, colder winter.”

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We had no idea how far to the east the ash cloud extended but it was very evident in western Missouri. So much so that nobody would be out and about. The Station manager suggested that everyone move from the Lodge to the shelter because we couldn’t keep the dust out of the air inside the Lodge. We moved a few at a time because we didn’t have enough gas masks to go around. Once everyone was settled into the shelter, the manager suggested that I make up a watch schedule so someone would be listening to the radio full time.

I think I’d seen all the TV shows, *Supervolcano*, *Mega Disasters: Yellowstone* and even *When Yellowstone Erupts*. Most seemed to assume that the next eruption would be larger than the first and could produce between 3,000km³ and 5,000km³ of ash. That amount of ash would carry as far east as Ohio or Pennsylvania. The volcanic winter associated with that large of an eruption would be felt worldwide and most of the agricultural regions on the planet would suffer due to cold and the lack of sunlight. It seemed that the only food grown would be in heated greenhouses with some form of grow light to replace the missing sunlight.

About 9 hours after we had buttoned up the shelter, the guy on duty woke me up to tell me that the air system was malfunctioning. I checked and the volume of air was less than half of what it should have been. We shut down the system and removed the filter finding it to be clogged with fine ash particles. We cleaned and put it back in. I sent him to the Lodge to find the box of furnace filters we had. He and I install one in front of the CBRN filter and I told him to check on it hourly and then I turned in to finish my sleep.

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We started getting ash in Palmdale the day following the earthquake. Minor at first, it continued to build and I was getting ready to lock up the shelter when David and his boys pulled in. I tried my receiver and got nothing but static. Even my windup radio wouldn't pull in the local stations. I charged the battery on the laptop so the kids and I could play games. That laptop was a sore point. It had been Amy's and there was nothing wrong with it other than it not being the latest or the greatest. It had ample room for all of my files including an assortment of patriot fiction stories including my own.

Uncertain about what to expect in light of the double whammy Mother Nature had dealt us, I tried to cover all bases. I schooled or re-schooled everyone in the assorted fire-arms available although it was a limited quantity. I started with the .22 auto, moved to the .32 auto and then the .45 auto. I then covered the Mossberg, my M1A and finally the M82A1M. I think I had to explain at least twice why none of my weapons, excluding the Barrett, didn't have scopes (I don't like them).

Several hours into our stay Lance and Elvia showed up and asked if there was room for them. Not long after, Chris, Patti and Daniel showed up with the same request. Finally Dave and Dick came calling asking if they could use a corner. You have no idea how much I wanted to say no or at least chide them for not being prepared. Sharon had been soaking a large pot of pinto beans planning to make them last several days. Right after dinner, she started a like amount soaking, bringing the pot to boiling.

Our freezer had been moved to the shelter less than a week before and we had a large supply of ground beef; however, even chili gets boring if you eat it too often. We tried various casseroles including tuna and noodles, lasagna plus baked a 7 bone roast with potatoes, onions and carrots. Instead of packing the freezer with things like roasts, ground beef, round steak and Swiss steak, we had several packages of pizzas and such, taking up more room than they should have and reducing the space for the more compact meats.

I had a recipe for white bread on my computer that I downloaded from somewhere; probably Frugal's and she used it to make two loaves at a time.

The Lodge – Chapter 20

It became a daily chore to clean the shelter's air filter and it was on the security detail's to-do list. I can't tell you when the eruption stopped, exactly. The ash cloud from the northwest began to thin and I guessed that perhaps the eruption had stopped. I was told that less ash had been accumulating in the air filter and went outside to look around. I could just see the lake but that was a major improvement.

The Station manager and I had a discussion resulting in us moving out of the shelter and back into the Lodge. It took the better part of a day to vacuum up the dust that had filtered through every crack and cranny. The amount of ash on the ground wasn't really that deep, about 10" although 10" of ash would cause real problems for the farmers.

The next day, we made our way to the Station and began to inspect the turbines, boilers and so forth. They concluded it would take anywhere from 10 days to 2 weeks to get one turbine operational meaning we wouldn't be generating full power for a month to 6 weeks. However, there was a problem and no one could see a solution, we got our coal from Wyoming's Powder River Basin. We had a one year supply stored; but, how long would it take to find a new source?

How deeply was that coal buried now? One concern that had mining companies worrying was the amount of overburden they had to remove to get a ton of coal. It had been a 1:1 ratio but was expected to increase because most of the easily mined coal had already been mined and burned in power plants. This was a case where KCPL's motive for stockpiling coal, the government, seemed unimportant in face of the eruption. We had enough coal to keep us going until someone could find a new source, provided a one year supply was enough.

Back to the task at hand, we resumed security for Montrose Station while the plant operators began the task of bringing each plant up. I sent a runner to Clinton to notify Kent and Kevin that we should have one plant up in 2 weeks or less. KCPL was controlling where the power went, beginning with the local area around the Station. We were told that most of the Stations had been shut down to prevent damage from the volcanic ash and were now being brought back online.

For those of us who didn't live close to Yellowstone, the major concern would be the effect on the climate. Overall, the earth would cool, perhaps offsetting global warming. That cooling would result in lowered agricultural outputs for years to come. Indeed, most of the northern hemisphere would suffer from the eruption. We would go from buying groceries in stores to growing our own in greenhouses, at first, and in fields, later.

I paused to wonder where they were fighting the war today. TOM said in one of his stories that there had not been a single day without war somewhere on the planet Earth since the beginning of recorded history. Although I was an hourly employee, I didn't expect to see the overtime my crew and I were due anytime soon. You may recall that when the Station was shut down, we had to wait for an employee from Kansas City to

bring our paychecks. That wasn't the normal procedure; we could have them directly deposited or receive a check in normal times. I wonder how TOM is doing.

o

I'm fine, thanks for asking. That is if having three times as many people in our shelter as it was designed for is normal. You know how it goes, Lance and Elvia asked and then Chris and Patti asked and the... It was hard to say no as long as there was still some floor space. It's your Christian duty to help others. And, we'd only had the *Big One* earthquake and *Supervolcano* Yellowstone exploding, so there was little radiation danger unless we had a gamma ray burst. I can't take time to explain everything when I'm up to my butt in ash from Yellowstone.

The only thing I didn't have that actually made sense would have been the soft mount for the Barrett rifle. That way we could have fabricated a pintle mount for the rifle and used it more like a semi-auto machinegun. It would be a slight problem reloading the magazines since I only had 10, but there were plenty of free hands around to help. While I didn't have the rifle until recently, I'd had the owner's manual on my computer since Barrett posted on it their website. I also had .pdf on all of my guns except the 38H and there was a disassembly guide for it.

Chris had all kinds of round and square tubing and Dave had a full machine shop in his garage. Between the two, anything we needed could be fabricated. Everyone had some food although we had the most. We pooled it and ended up with an interesting menu. The staples, beans and rice, were ever present and Elvia kept them interesting using Cuban recipes. Chris and Patti had the second largest larder, mostly shelf stable foods. We'd eat for now and Dick produced a rifle and shotgun to add to the armory. Lance, of course, had his revolver and 2 plus boxes of ammo.

I believe I've mentioned that Chris doesn't like guns so I didn't offer him one to carry. I took the pictures of the soft mount and the Barrett to Dave and asked if he could make the mount. He said he could, provided I could supply the power so we borrowed Chris's 10 gauge extension cord and connected it directly to the generator. Between Chris and me, we had a half dozen or more 100' outdoor extension cord and were able to run power to those who needed it. Chris passed because he had the 5kw generator as did Lance who had my 7kw generator.

We made no effort to close off the tract deciding that could wait until we became certain it was necessary. That decision wasn't put off for long when a group entered the tract and followed the sound of the generators. They may have had us outgunned, but they weren't protecting their homes. What I can't figure out is how you aim a pistol holding it sideways. Gangsters do that, probably as some sort of status symbol, but it is not really effective when you are up against a bunch older people whose sole goal is protecting their homes.

They shot first before they got to us and drove straight into a hail of lead. We collected 4 9mm handguns and 10 magazines. The juveniles were packed in the back seat of their car and driven across the street into the Target parking lot. None of us had any 9mm ammo and we only found a partial box in the car. We made a backdoor entrance to Big Five at 47th and S and got some more 9mm ammo plus enough rifles and shotguns to outfit the six families because they were on sale (not actually, but the discount was 100%). I even got a bottle of glove oil for my sling.

They had Halazone tablets to purify water and salt tablets for people performing heavy labor in a hot, dry climate. They even carried Katadyn water filters and we picked up 6 pocket microfilters and one spare element for each.

◦

“I bought 10 cases of MREs, a Katadyn water filter and a top line trauma bag. The ammo, the MREs, the Trauma Bag, the water filter and the guns and cases.” Does this mean I’m famous? Yep, I’m a legend in my own mind. That was a while back, story #40, *In the Aftermath*, and the search term I used was Katadyn water filter.

◦

Someone asked me where they could get a generator and I suggested Harbor Freight Tools in Lancaster. Later the same day, everyone had generators and drums of gasoline that they’d suctioned from Service Station tanks. Since the closest store selling PRI-G was down in LA, I didn’t offer to share my meager supply. The generator that Chris had mounted in his truck was one I bought for the racing team and came from Harbor. It’s been running about 14 years now without a hiccup.

Life was not without its little problems. Broken sewer lines meant we couldn’t use the toilets and broken water lines meant that if we did, the tank wouldn’t refill. The natural gas was out, as was the electricity. Time-Warner, our local cable outlet, was off the air and so were most of the radio stations. The Governor sent a single company of CNG into the Antelope Valley area, too little and too late.

For every problem, there is a solution. We put in outhouses to replace the toilets. We drove to Little Rock Reservoir for our water, but it had to be filtered before we could even use it to wash our hands. Dick installed my propane jets and our gas appliances worked. The downside of that was I had the only propane tanks and the washer and dryer were in constant use, using cleaned up water from Littlerock. Everyone came to our house to cook so we set up 2 8’ tables on the patio with folding chairs and dining became a neighborhood project. According to the radio station, no one had a good idea, yet, about how much was ejected in the explosive eruption. If the amount we got was any judge, it had to be a lot. The problem with the phones was primarily the lack of power; however, some cables had been broken and would need to be repaired before use.

I had a sneaking feeling that once the emergency passed, those appropriated generators and a supply of stabilized gasoline would find their way into garages or backyard sheds. More than one person commented that they had thought about stocking more food, but hadn't gotten around to it. Similarly, my M1A received the kind of interest, that before all this happened, only Lance and I had voiced. It might not be the most expensive M1A rifle, but given the California laws about so called assault weapons, the M1A was one of the few choices.

The comments on my small armory ranged from *nice* to *it's an armed camp*. Believe me, if I could have had more, I surely would have. It's like the NRA says, "Studies indicate that firearms are used over 2 million times a year for personal protection, and that the presence of a firearm, without a shot being fired, prevents crime in many instances. Shooting usually can be justified only where crime constitutes an immediate, imminent threat to life, limb, or, in some cases, property." I still hadn't fired my Barrett and got Sharon to take me to Ron and Linda's.

"Hey uglier than me, what's up?"

"I got a new rifle and would like for you to take me somewhere out in the desert to shoot it."

"Do you want to go to that range you went to back in '06?"

"It's a little on the short side and I wouldn't want anyone to see the rifle. But, if you take me, I'll supply the ammo and we'll both shoot."

"What kind of rifle might you have that you couldn't take to a range, an AR-15?"

"Bite your tongue. I doubt I'd ever be that desperate."

"Well, tell me."

"The manufacturer is Barrett Firearms."

"No."

"Yes, an M82A1M aka M107 and I have the match ammo and some of the multipurpose ammo."

"Where did you...how did you...that gun's illegal in California."

"Do tell; now you see why it can't go to a range."

"No shit. They'd lock you up and throw away the key."

"I figure anything more than a week in jail would be a life sentence."

“When?”

“Tomorrow ok?”

“I suppose. Where should we go?”

“Some place where we have a clear field of fire for about 5 miles, out east somewhere. Do you know a spot?”

“I just might. Say how did you make out with the earthquake and that damned eruption?”

“Same as you I suppose. We have that shelter and ended up with about 2½ times as many people in it that it was planned for.”

“When did you do that?”

“Just before we fenced in the front yard.”

“How long has it been?”

“It’s been the better part of two years. I keep waiting for you to call and offer me a ride to meeting but since you don’t go, I don’t need to go. Besides, Sharon would have to buy the booze and you know she won’t do that. The only booze she buys is for her.”

“I don’t mean to be nosey, but where did you...”

“From a friend in Missouri and I’d better leave it at that. Oh, you don’t know, when Damon came out Christmas of ’08, he brought my PT1911.”

“And, that is a...”

“Taurus copy of the M1911A1 with 16 enhancements. Nice pistol; I’ll bring it too, it’s about time I put a few rounds through it. Sucker is illegal in California.”

“Do you have any California legal guns? And, do you have plenty of ammo?”

“My M1A and the Mossberg are legal, it’s about 50-50. I have 2,000 rounds of .45ACP, around 8,000 plus for the Barrett. I upped my supply of 7.62 to over 5,000 rounds and my shotgun ammo is about triple what I originally bought. Didn’t get the .22 rifle but there’s a few bricks of .22LR put up.

“You’re expecting a war?”

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“Can’t happen; we’ve had our three disasters with the power outage, the Big One and Yellowstone.”

“Never say never. Sean Connery’s wife when he remade *Thunderball* under the title, *Never Say Never Again*.”

“Huh?”

“Never mind, I’ll print off a copy of my story.”

“Are you still wasting your time writing?”

“It’s my mission in life, to educate and entertain.”

“Since when?”

“Sometime back in ‘04.”

“So you now have a friend in Missouri?”

“He used to live in Utah, but moved. He and I collaborated on an article laying out some survival tips.”

“So, besides the fence and a bomb shelter, what else is new?”

“We got a good deal on a propane fueled residential standby 30kw generator and the only things we lack to be truly comfortable are water, sewer, gas and phone.”

“And garbage pickup.”

“That’s would be nice, too.”

“Who all did you have in that shelter?”

“Sharon and I, Amy and her two, Lorrie and Jeffrey, David and two of his boys, Lance and Elvia, Chris, Patti and Daniel plus Dick and Dave. That’s seventeen.”

“How many did you plan for?”

“Five.”

“I picked up a gasoline fueled generator from Harbor Freight Tools.”

“You and all of my close neighbors. What did you do for gas?”

“One station had a three phase generator and they pumped their tanks dry. We managed to get 6 drums of gas.”

“I may be able to spare some if you need it. One gallon of PRI-G equals 3785 milliliters and treats 2,000 gallons of gas. Therefore, you need 9.25 milliliters per 5 gallon can. A 55- gallon drum would require 101.75ml or 7 tablespoons per drum. I have one partial pint left and don't know how to get more without going to LA. There's no way on God's green Earth the CNG is going to let us into LA.”

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You think you have problems? Consider this:

WASHINGTON – Emergency planners are struggling to identify growing millions who need fast rescue when the lights go out: A power outage also shuts down their life-supporting home medical equipment.

It's an issue that sneaked up on emergency officials as better medical treatments over the past decade have helped more critically ill people not only survive but move out of nursing homes.

The Associated Press found that where these people live determines how invisible they are to rescuers, starting with whether they even know to sign up for critical-care lists operated by utilities in every state.

How serious is the problem?

When ice downed electric lines in Epping, N.H., last month, police found 60-year-old Richard Lapoint dead, hooked to his powerless oxygen machine. The town's rescue workers hadn't known he was power-dependent.

A generator and a stack of batteries couldn't keep up with Gatlan Graham's ventilator and other life-supporting equipment when Hurricane Ike knocked out power to his Houston home for 14 days in September. The family fled in search of electricity, spending more than \$1,500 to keep the 17-year-old alive.

When Hurricane Gustav hit Louisiana, dozens of people with home oxygen machines in tow evacuated to government medical shelters, where surprised officials had to scramble to find enough old-fashioned oxygen tanks when backup generators in Baton Rouge failed.

An AP survey found huge state-to-state variations in utilities' *medical priority lists* designed to track who depends on power for life, suggesting only a fraction of patients know they're available. Illinois' biggest utilities together report 10,000 patients on critical-care lists, for example. Neighboring Indiana's biggest list carries just 2,000 names.

Even if patients did sign up, the lists may offer false hope. In large outages, companies don't have the ability to restore power to one home before another down the street.

"The power companies don't get on the phone and dial 911 for their customers," said Dr. David Prezant, chief medical officer for the New York City Fire Department, who is pushing for medical registries of the power-dependent. "When there's a blackout, citywide, nationwide, we are really unprepared with any structured database, knowledge of who these people are and where they are."

Registries are starting to form - from Benton County, Ark., to North Dakota, which begins a statewide Web registry this month.

A pilot project in northwest Ohio is giving cards to life-support users to hang in their windows during a flood or tornado, signaling to rescuers if they need help or are OK. The Michigan Department of Community Health had hoped to launch a special needs registry this year to track people getting home medical care and let response agencies know who might need help during a disaster. But the project is at a standstill, said department spokesman James McCurtis. Some Michigan counties already have a registry in place.

San Diego Gas & Electric says it recently met with each of its 700 known power-dependent customers to discuss emergency plans for outages, and offers advance warning when wildfires trigger rolling blackouts.

In contrast, this is the advice from Idaho's Public Utilities Commission: "If someone has a power requirement for life and health, the individual is responsible for coming up with their own backup plans."

To help people prepare, the Food and Drug Administration plans this spring to issue the first checklist for device recipients to receive when leaving the hospital.

Emergency workers feel the clock ticking.

"It's incumbent upon us over the next 4½ months, before we get into hurricane season again, to have a better plan than we had going into Ike," said Terry Moore, Houston's deputy emergency management coordinator.

Under consideration are mobile *charging stations* that could rotate through Houston neighborhoods for patients to recharge depleted batteries, or perhaps evacuating the power-dependent.

"This is a huge vulnerability," added Dr. Lewis Rubinson of the University of Washington, who advises the government on disaster preparations and separately is preparing guidelines for emergency oxygen supplies. "This is something that patients should demand."

It's a growing population. Roughly 2 million people use home oxygen machines, mostly *concentrators* that make oxygen on the spot as long as electricity flows. Just a few years ago, oxygen-gas tanks that don't require home electricity were the norm. At least another 10,000 people breathe with home ventilators, and thousands more have implanted heart pumps called VADs, or ventricular assist devices.

There even are a few remaining users of those body-encasing iron lungs infamous from the polio era. Moore counts 19 in Houston-area homes. Last May, a Tennessee woman who spent nearly 60 years in an iron lung after childhood polio died when the power went out and her family couldn't get an emergency generator working.

Millions more use other at-home equipment: dialysis machines, nebulizers, IV and nutrition pumps, CPAP breathing masks. But power failures bring the most immediate risk for users of ventilators, heart pumps and oxygen.

Ventilators and heart pumps have internal batteries that last 45 minutes to a few hours, time to put on longer-lasting batteries or get to help. Some portable oxygen concentrators can run on batteries for three or four hours or be plugged into a car adapter, but patients typically depend on oxygen suppliers to deliver old-fashioned tanks of the gas for emergency use.

No one knows how often a power outage means death for such patients. Typically, death certificates note just the underlying disease, said disabilities specialist Lex Frieden of the University of Texas at Houston, who tried to track down the power-dependent during Ike's prolonged outage to see who needed help.

Backups sometimes fail even in short outages.

Last summer, 15-year-old Fernando Vargas died when a Boston power outage silenced his ventilator early one morning.

When the power went out in Carpentersville, Ill., the implanted pump powering Jack Bostwick's heart stopped, too, a week after the 60-year-old's optimistic discharge from the hospital in May 2007. The device's internal emergency battery somehow had dislodged, apparently giving him no time to insert longer-lasting ones. His family asks why Bostwick, newly registered on the utility's critical-care list, wasn't warned about a planned outage for pole repair. The utility declined comment because of a pending lawsuit.

But long outages are the big threat because batteries don't last and oxygen tanks need repeated refills.

"I thought I was prepared," said Houston's Kristin Graham. Before Hurricane Ike, she readied a generator, gasoline and rechargeable batteries that could run son Gatlan's

ventilator for six to nine hours on a charge, and his oxygen machine for another few hours.

But the outage lasted so long, Graham said, “We couldn't afford to buy the highest-powered generator on the market. You can't run that generator 24 hours. You run it a couple of hours, you let it rest a couple of hours. I could never get all the batteries re-charged.”

Graham signed up for her utility's priority list and Houston's 211 emergency service, but said no one checked if she needed aid. Ultimately she loaded Gatlan, his medical equipment and his 4- and 8-year-old siblings into the family van and checked into a hotel room, first in a less hard-hit Houston area and later in cheaper Austin, to get electricity.

“I don't know what people would do if they didn't have a way to get out on their own,” she said. “No one cared this time if you were on a critical list. They couldn't. It was too broad.”

The 2003 Northeast blackout, the nation's largest power failure, was a wake-up call for New York City's Prezant. In a study published in the journal *Critical Care Medicine*, Prezant tracked citywide 911 calls plus emergency room visits at his own large hospital, Montefiore Medical Center, during the nearly 29-hour blackout.

The falls and heart attacks doctors had expected didn't materialize. But paramedics and the ER had a surge in patients with at-home oxygen, ventilators and other respiratory equipment who needed help or feared they soon would. Moreover, frail patients often were admitted to the hospital because doctors couldn't be sure a power failure was the only problem, a huge expense fraught with the risk of medical errors, said Prezant, a lung specialist.

When it comes to oxygen, many home health care companies *bend over backward* to race tanks to customers during power outages, noted Washington's Rubinson. In fact, after Hurricane Katrina, the American Association for Home Care asked the government to designate oxygen providers as *first responders* for easier movement in disaster zones.

Medicare requires home oxygen suppliers to have customized emergency backup plans for customers.

But if roads are impassable or the disaster's too big, home oxygen may not be delivered.

There are no overarching recommendations on how many backup tanks patients should keep on hand. Nor is there agreement about home generators, which have their own risk – deadly carbon monoxide poisoning if operated wrong - and can't always ade-

quately power energy-hogging medical equipment. The FDA isn't advising generators in its patient checklist due out this spring, and the disabled often can't afford one.

The Lodge – Chapter 22

But the AP survey found utilities frequently advise generators, such as Wisconsin utility We Energies, which also doesn't keep a list of power-dependent customers.

"There's a danger to keep the list and give a false hope you might be able to turn that power on sooner," said company spokesman Brian Manthey. "We feel more comfortable telling people you need to have a backup plan," including generators or batteries.

Whatever a family's backup plan, Rubinson and Prezant stress that local emergency officials must know how many power-dependent patients they might have to rescue, and getting utilities and home care companies to share customer lists is a good start. That's happening in northern Arizona. In Coconino County, home of Flagstaff, the emergency office gets a regularly updated medical-priority list from the state's largest utility, and records GPS coordinates for those homes so they can be found fast.

"We probably don't have 100 percent of everyone. There are people who slip through those cracks," said emergency planner Sherrie Collins.

Federal patient-privacy rules limit sharing, cautioned Bill Desmarais, a co-owner of Home Care Specialists Inc. in Haverhill, Mass., which had about 800 oxygen-dependent customers using backup tanks when last month's Northeast ice storm cut power.

He does a home safety assessment for new customers and offers a tank in advance, to keep for emergencies. Such tanks can be over 4 feet tall and weigh 80 pounds. "They're green and they're ugly," Desmarais said. "A lot of people don't like it as ornaments in their living room. ... You can't force them."

Even the federal government was surprised by the demand during Hurricane Gustav, when nearly 1,400 people were housed in special medical shelters in Louisiana and Texas, 20 percent to 40 percent of whom required powered medical equipment. When generators failed in Baton Rouge shelters, an oxygen supplier hired to refill patients' oxygen tanks couldn't keep up with the unanticipated need.

"We had some nervous wringing of hands as some of the oxygen tanks started going down to low levels," said Dr. Allen Dobbs, chief medical officer of the National Disaster Medical System - although enough eventually were found. "We have to have reliable contingency backup plans for these folks."

"I didn't figure I could install a residential standby until things settled down. Sure wouldn't mind having one."

"You're the propane expert in this neck of the woods; make sure you get large enough tanks."

"What do you have?"

“A 10k and a 5k plumbed together with remotely controlled shutoff valves, any chance you could get someone you know at AmeriGas to top them off?”

“Maybe, but if you don’t have an account, they’d need cash.”

“Can do. There’s a bunch of money in the Iowa account.”

“How much do you have in Wells Fargo?”

“None; when Amy decided to give up the KIA’s we closed the account so Wells Fargo couldn’t tap it.”

“With Sharon taking early Social Security, we managed to pay off all the old taxes plus the current ones. We refinanced the house at a 6% fixed rate 30-year mortgage. A year later the housing bubble burst and I’m guessing we owe more on the house than it’s worth. If we stick with it, it should come back up in value, assuming I/we live that long.”

“They might want you to prepay a certain amount of the gas just to be sure the check clears.”

“Where’s your outhouse?”

“The sewer lines are still flowing and I’ve been lugging water in from the swimming pool. We’re only using the downstairs bathroom. Nine a.m. tomorrow?”

“Make it 10, I need my beauty rest.”

The following day, he picked me up at 10:30 and we drove east of Palmdale about 20 miles. He had a nice flat spot where he claimed he’d shot before. We both walked 1,000 paces and then split the difference as the location to place the target. We went back, assembled the rifle and took turns, burning through 120 rounds of the M1022.

“That monster doesn’t kick nearly as much as I thought it would.”

“How does it compare to your .375 H&H magnum?”

“Much softer recoil, I could get used to one of these.”

“When you move to New Mexico, you can buy one. The rifle is about nine grand, the sights another two to three grand, the soft mount a grand, magazines one-thirty-five each and Barrett ball ammo about four-fifty a round. After that, you start hanging out in bars where the military hangs out and look for some Sergeant who has our problem and needs money. Maybe he’ll provide you with some Mk211MP, at a price.”

“Expensive?”

“Seven-fifty a round, but it’s made by Winchester if that’s any solace.”

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That volcanic ash is really fine, almost like talcum powder. The estimate of two weeks was revised to 30 days for plant one. The dust had worked itself into everyplace possible in the machinery. It became a matter of getting all of the shop vacuums we could find and covering every square inch, inside and out. We got lucky, but only because the turbines had been shut down before the ash arrived. Otherwise, I imagine it would have worked its way into lubricated surfaces and everything related to the turbine would have had to be dismantled.

The sunrises were grey and the sunset’s red. Most of the time, we had grey skies. *Red sky at night, sailor’s delight; red sky in morning, sailor’s warning.* When we see a red sky at night, this means that the setting sun is sending its light through a high concentration of dust particles. This usually indicates high pressure and stable air coming in from the west. Basically good weather will follow. A red sunrise reflects the dust particles of a system that has just passed from the west. This indicates that a storm system may be moving to the east. If the morning sky is a deep fiery red, it means high water content in the atmosphere. So, rain is on its way.

Over a period of months, Montrose station was finally online. During the same period many services we lost were restored, including the internet. I sent TOM a message hoping he had email service too. I wanted to know how they’d made out with the earthquake and Yellowstone for dessert. His reply was enlightening.

“The package Evan delivered works like a champ. Thinking about adding a wheel kit. Don’t play much baseball, so I haven’t lost any of the balls you sent me. Haven’t needed those grownup laws, either. Ciao.”

I’m sure you can translate that, can’t you? The rifle works fine, but it’s heavy. He hasn’t used any of the M67s or the M136s. If he was savvy enough to code his reply, it would appear that they were ok and he had his thinking cap on. Not that the message would escape close scrutiny, but the casual observer would have to know TOM to really understand the message. That said, he’d written many a tale and probably everyone in the country knew what he wanted to defend the home place.

Things are back to normal. Make that as normal as they can be in the midst of a volcanic winter. The company erected a greenhouse to keep the roughly 150 employees and their families fed. You don’t see much food on the grocery store shelves, yet. But surely as the sun rises in the east, it will happen. The final estimate of the ash was on the order of 3,500km³ or about 840mi³. They only gave the cubic kilometers so I looked up the formula. The magnitude of the California earthquake was corrected because I’d heard wrong. The magnitude was 8.2, not 7.2, meaning that it really was the *Big One*.

Who in their right mind would want to live in a place like that? Not many, the migrations out of California to other states have exceeded the migrations into California for years. However, due to the birthrate, the population continued to grow. I think many people are locked into 30 year mortgages and with the lousy economy, etc., can't afford to move.

The next time I tried to email TOM, the email bounced. A phone call got the disconnected number recording. Did something happen to him or did they finally wise up and move back to the Midwest? If they did, at least he could own the guns he had, legally. The same couldn't be said for the ammo, *baseballs* or the *grownup laws*.

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